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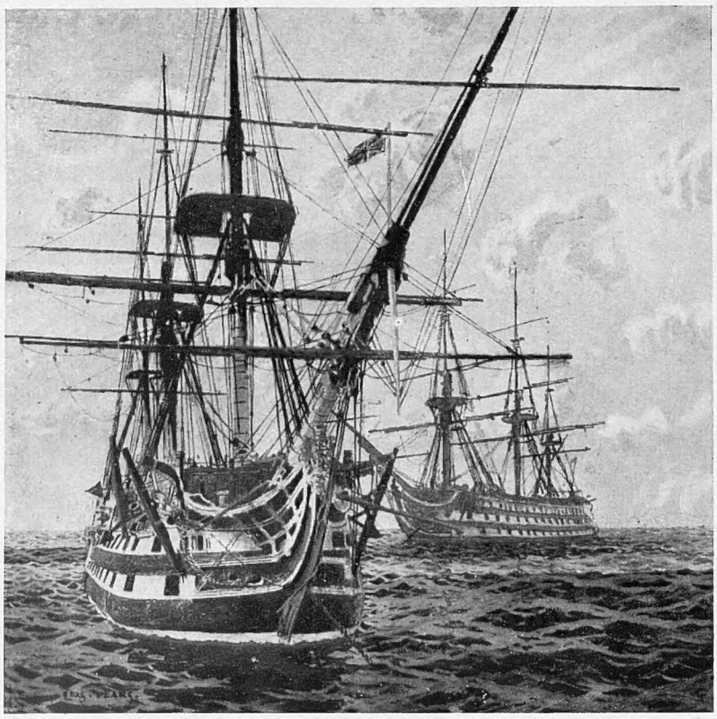
WOODEN WALLS



WHEN a tree has fallen to the woodman's axe, the combined forces of weather, insects and fungi can soon cause it to rot. If timber is to have a long and useful life, it must be preserved. How to do this is a problem which British chemists and chemical products have done much to solve. Early in the 19th century Britain's need to preserve the great quantities of timber used for her fleets and for the railways then being built at home spurred four English inventors to lay the foundations of the science of wood preservation. Between 1832 and 1838 John Bethell introduced creosoting, now the commonest method : J. J. Margary showed how copper sulphate arrests and prevents decay : John Kyan pointed the use of mercuric chloride in the process known as " kyanising " : and William Burnett discovered the value of zinc chloride, one of the cheapest effective treatments against fungi. Today these methods, modified and improved, are used all over the world. Deep penetration of the preservatives into the timber is aided by pumping out the air from the wood cells, as in the " deep kyanising " or " full creosoting " processes; by steaming; or by soaking with a solvent, such as trichlorethylene. By this means the life of pit prop and paving block, harbour pile and telegraph pole, railway sleeper and building timber has been prolonged tenfold. Recently many new chemicals and mixtures have been applied. Constituents of creosote, such as phenol and cresol, are now used, but they can be rendered more effective by chemical conversion to nitro-phenol and nitro-cresol, and by mixing with fluorides. The ravages of the termite can be prevented by arsenical products and those of the death-watch beetle by metallic soaps. Chemicals, such as monammonium phosphate, make timber resistant to fire. War has stimulated research. Synthetic resins have greatly increased the life of aircraft and it has been discovered that, if urea is applied to green timber at the time of sawing, the wood can be dried out and be ready for use in half the usual time. These and other chemical achievements are today aiding the allied war efforts. On a tomorrow they will be at the service of the community for the purposes of peace.

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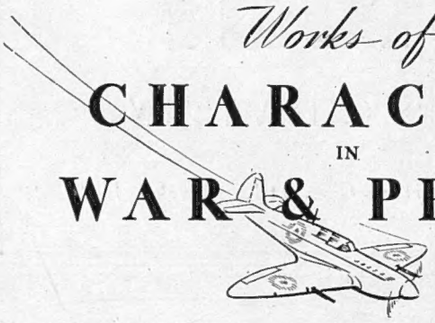

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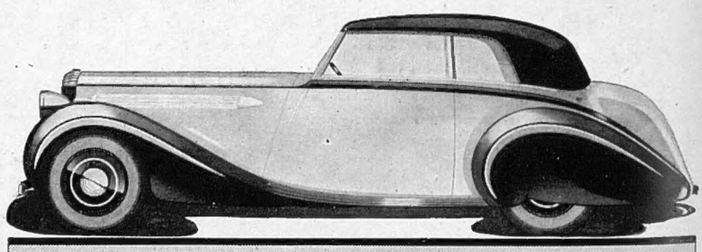

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Volume CLXXVIII No. 2326 The SPHERE, London, August 19, 1944

THE SPHERE
With which is incorporated "THE GRAPHIC"
The Empire's Illustrated Weekly

THE ROAD TO FALAISE: THE SHELL- AND BOMB-WRECKED VILLAGE OF ROCQUANCOURT after the fierce fighting which took place between the Canadian and Nazi forces on the road from Caen to the important key-point of Falaise

Through this town the Germans streamed back down the road which eventually leads to Paris. They were bombed from the air and shelled from the land when the big Allied offensive opened, until they were driven out of Rocquancourt, which, like so many other places in France, had been converted by them into a fortress. To the west of the Allied line, where the Americans have been making lightning advances, the enemy has had little time for wrecking and for demolitions: but to the south of Caen the fighting has throughout been of the most savage nature. A swath of desolation has been cut through this area, with wrecked towns and villages on every hand. Rocquancourt lies on the stretch of road which runs as straight as a line from the city of Caen for three-quarters of the distance to Falaise

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A WAR NEWSLETTER —No. 259

1, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.1.

The Net Contracts.—After two months of the swiftest advance in history along a thousand-mile line, which brought the Russians to the border of East Prussia, to the passes of the Carpathians, to the gates of Warsaw, to the Gulf of Riga, sealing off from land escape perhaps more than thirty divisions of enemy troops in Finland and the Baltic northern States, then followed a few days of what seemed by comparison a "lull." There was a "cat-and-mouse" effect in this pause, before the consummation of those tempting pounces on East Prussia, on Warsaw, on the Galician oilfields and even the coalfields of Silesia. But while we waited, the Western Allies took their turn in the limelight. While the British held the hinge of the Normandy front and painfully pushed it back, the Americans to the west, in an advance as swift and spectacular as any comparative campaign on the Russian front, altered the whole face of the Normandy campaign by sealing off the large Brest peninsula, putting in the bag the once-menacing U-boat bases and three or four splendid Brittany ports, and turning also east to square off and level southwards the enemy positions still holding south and east of Avranches. And as they moved east, British pressure at the hinge began to show bigger results. The box created by the sea, the Loire and the Seine came much clearer into the picture, and began to contract with a speed which only a fortnight ago none of us can have conceived possible. The enemy began to be pinned against parts of the Loire and the Seine, those bridgeless barriers, equally distressing to an enemy needing reinforcements for battle or needing a way of escape from battle. Here, in the short Russian "lull," was a transformation in the west of spectacular dimensions. The supply and transport problems of groups of armies advancing on vast fronts are great and incredibly complex. How the Russians have achieved their advances hitherto are beyond the comprehension even of experts. That they are now coiling for another multiple-spring we take as certain. We may expect that east, west and south, the ripening fruits of years of planning will in the next few weeks be gathered in all fronts in a bonanza harvest; and, before winter calls a halt, it is reasonable to hope, even to expect, that the Nazi fields and boughs will be bare and the Allied barns full to bursting. We must allow, of course, for snags, set-backs and delays. We are entitled to rely on the inexorable logic of mathematics, and on the united purpose of a score of Allied nations who have no illusions and no differences of opinion concerning the nature and necessary fate of the common enemy of mankind.

A Decisive Battle.—If even a part of the arguments put forward by official and semi-official strategists expounding the Battle of Normandy be soundly based, then the treatment meted out to the Nazi panzer counter-attack towards Avranches on August 7 may be judged to be one of the decisive battles of the war, or a first act in such a decisive battle. Hitherto on the Normandy Front we have counted our bag of enemy armour in tens, and given to those liquidations the importance of signal successes. We were clearly given to understand, as soon as this Nazi panzer stroke was observed to be massing, that immense importance must attach to its success or failure. It was a desperate stroke, for which had been collected, from the last available reserves, the best that remained in reach for the Nazis of their now declining strength in armour. If that last great concentration were dispersed, then the pinning of the Western Army groups against the bridgeless Seine and Loire must soon follow, as a preliminary to an unobstructed drive for Paris, and indeed to an assault over the Seine, to sweep across the rear of the sea defences of the Channel Ports in the Pas de Calais even to the frontiers of Belgium. Exactly what number of tanks and armoured vehicles these new and war-worn Panzer Divisions could muster, we do not clearly know. But we may be sure that five hours of bombing and strafing by Typhoons and other aircraft with rockets and bombs so mauled these units as to stifle the attempt to drive a wedge between the Allies, and as to ensure that there can be no recovery for another attempt within the decisive limits of time. Those limits are narrow. The tough defence of the British, on which the great strategic sweep of the Americans across Brittany and eastwards towards Paris hinged and depended, has itself now turned to attack on a broad front and a decisive scale. August 7 was a tremendous and decisive day, and its harvest no man can over-estimate. This was grand strategy; this was team-work par excellence. It is impossible to accord too much praise to the brilliance of the staff work, the achievements of the air arm, the toughness of the British and the mastery of warfare which the American armies have gained in record time.

WHEN THE FÜHRER WENT TO MEET MUSSOLINI after the assassination attempt. Hitherto, the only pictures of Hitler after the "Generals' Plot" have been photographs sent by radio out of Germany. These have not shown the unhappy "Leader" with great clarity. Above, however, is the first actual photographic print of Hitler as he went to greet Mussolini shortly after he had been "wounded slightly" in the bomb plot. It will be noted that he is wearing a cloak, in place of his usual overcoat, which effectively conceals his arms, one of which was reported to have suffered slight damage. The usual band of Nazi bigwigs parade on the right: on Mussolini's train is the usual anti-aircraft detachment, without which no Nazi or Fascist leader would travel to-day

Dropping the Pilots.—Now that a people's court has shown its contempt for a bungling and assassin caste of Prussian Generals by hanging them in batches, we are justified in drawing up a balance-sheet of the effect of this internal revolution on the chances of an early victory. Many historians (and other theorists) have argued for decades that Nazism is only Prussianism. In arguing that all Germans are blood guilty—which is a natural and reasonable argument—because they suffered Hitler to rise and slavishly approved all his villainies so long as these were successful, the theorists accepted Prussianism as the cradle and parent of all German aggression in every form during the past centuries. Of all these forms, Hitlerism and Nazism is only one, if the most acute and hideous. And now the peoples of Germany by their own act have shown their contempt and detestation of the proud caste which has for so many generations led them down the garden-path to swift successes and irreparable disasters. They have spat on the father and mother of Nazism. That is good. But, in so doing, they have bound their souls anew to Hitler? That, if true, is not so good. But it is, I fancy, only half-true. The whole truth has never yet come out of Germany, which is the cradle of lies, as it is the cradle of barbarism. The accounts we have of that trial of the bungling assassins in the people's court smack, like other famous trials in the Reich, of meticulous stage-management. The accused were all too willing to confess and to incriminate themselves. And we have little to go on in estimating the impartiality of the judges or in guessing their secret thoughts. Or the thoughts of the people as a whole. What we can justifiably accept as truth is this: the Generals and staff officers of the old Prussian caste won Hitler's victories for him and long staved off the crushing defeats of his less brilliant "intuitions." Without their help he would have been in the cart long ago. This people's trial and sentence have condemned and contemned the proudest caste in any country, the most potent instrument of military aggression in European history, a caste utterly essential to German militarism in victory *or defeat.* Hitler has, cleverly enough, thrown on the whole people the responsibility for humiliating and dropping the military pilots of German aggression. But the war still goes on. The German people themselves (by leave of Hitler) have accomplished an action of tremendous historical importance, a bigger thing, perhaps, than if they had liquidated Hitler and his gang. They have gone to the source of their trouble and themselves outlawed at last the *fons et origo* of their shame and disasters. From this hated caste, God knows, they have suffered much for generations in humiliation. They will not have achieved their revenge without paying a price. But I am not quite sure they paid the price which Faust paid to Mephistopheles. I doubt whether they parted again with the fee-simple of their souls to Hitler. I should not wonder if it was not rather a lease-lend transaction, to be terminated when occasion offers. I am by no means certain that Hitler's clever move will lengthen the war. If so it prove, the German people will have killed two hated birds of prey with a single gift-stone. The caste they hate and the war they hate; and the third vulture will not long survive the other two.

Armistice and Peace Terms.—It is good to know that the Allied Powers are in agreement with comprehensive armistice terms, thought out in every particular at present foreseeable, against the day when Germany admits defeat. Such a comprehensive agreement is already vitally important. The ordinary man would put in the forefront of these terms: (a) The military occupation by strong Allied forces of all the Reich for an indefinite term; (b) immediate action to enforce the total destruction of all existing engines of war and weapons, and the total dismantling and destruction of all war factories and plants, oil storage and refinery and synthetic production plants, other than any reserved for internal needs under Allied military control; (c) the handing-over to the Allies of all named war criminals; (d) the restoration of all known treasures looted and taken to the Reich; (e) the instant evacuation of any territories outside the 1939 Reich still in Nazi occupation. Beyond these, and perhaps one or two more essentials, nothing whatever can be of immediate concern. Hasty action and decision will then become the most dangerous policy possible. When I hear that Allied foreign ministers are "already staking claims" to German territory, my blood boils. For here again is the midsummer madness of 1918-19. The statesmen, like the Generals, of the Allied nations have to-day one job: to secure an armistice on terms of unconditional surrender and then to render Germany powerless to continue or begin again war in any form. That job is by no means accomplished. Until it is done, it is mere lunacy and sheer waste of effort to examine maps and reconsider frontiers and partitions. That ultimate task must be done in cool blood, by cool heads, and by large-minded, fair-minded statesmen; and even so, it will be a task beyond human wisdom and foresight. Any talk to-day by so-called statesmen of any Allied nationality of compensating Poland for territory which Russia may claim, by giving to Poland the gift of another war-making minority problem in Silesia or East Prussia; or any talk of creating a Rhineland state under French hegemony; or of ceding Trieste to Yugoslavia—such and suchlike discussions and soundings are criminal folly and treachery to the cause. It is for Frenchmen to-day to organise themselves to fight still more fiercely to liberate their country which they yielded in 1940—without conditions. It is for Poles to redouble their efforts to clear the invaders from the last acre of their former country. It is as clearly the task of Yugoslavia. Three years hence it will be time enough to take maps down, take pencils out and take soundings and submit memoranda in the chancelleries of Europe. For three years to come, nothing should be important but military measures for security and matters concerning the organisation and welfare of the homeless and starving millions in Europe; temporary measures. Are we such fools as to be caught again in the follies of 1918?

THE OLD STAGER

ITALY: HOW THE EIGHTH ARMY FOUND THE CITY OF FLORENCE AFTER THE GERMANS HAD FLED. Five out of the six bridges across the River Arno were destroyed by the enemy in retreat: the sixth, the historic Ponte Vecchio (seen in the background of this picture) was intact, but houses on either side of it had been demolished to cause road blocks to its approaches

For some time after the Eighth Army had reached Florence the Germans remained in the northern part of the city. Now they have gone and all of it is in Allied hands. Before falling back to the "Gothic Line," however, five of the bridges were blown: the sixth, the Ponte Vecchio, is world-famous. On it are rows of shops, familiar to all visitors to the historic city. The Germans spared this bridge, but blocked the approaches to it with debris and mines. The rest of the city was looted by the enemy. Towards the end, there were 1,500 German soldiers holding up the advance of the Allies. These pulled out at the end of last week, and now all Florence is in Allied hands

ALLIED WAR SUCCESSES IN THREE COUNTRIES

—Late News Pictures from Italy, France and Albania

FRANCE: HOW THE NAZI SUPPLY LINES HAVE BEEN CUT throughout the whole battle area: This is a railroad bridge in the town of Laval on which Allied aircraft registered a direct hit and put one of the German supply lines out of action. Throughout the area along the rivers Seine and Loire this scene has been repeated scores and scores of times. Not only has the enemy thus been denied his reinforcements and supplies, but his lines of retreat are everywhere in jeopardy. The Germans are reported to be streaming back towards Paris with British and American aircraft everywhere playing havoc with bridges, railways, roads and troop concentrations

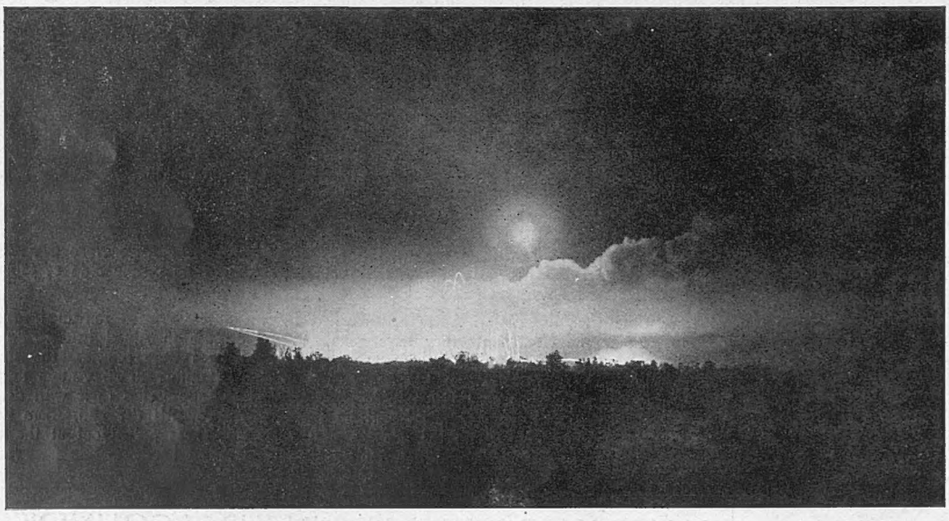
ALBANIA: THE FIRST LANDING MADE IN THIS WAR ON THE ALBANIAN COAST: At 00.15 hours on July 29, the newly formed "Land Force, Adriatic" made an unopposed landing in a bay some two miles south of the village of Spilje in Albania, on which a German garrison was based. This was the Force's first major operation, and the first time in this war that British troops have landed and fought in Albania. At 05.15 hours, two British destroyers bombarded the enemy positions: at 06.00 hours, the Commandos went in while troops held the beachhead. Resistance was stiffer than anticipated. At 12.00 hours, when the Force withdrew, the German garrison had virtually been wiped out, and contact was made with the Partisans. By 15.00 hours the force was re-embarked. The whole of the Balkan Air Force provided air cover and, by bombing roads, prevented the larger German garrisons north and south of Spilje from joining in the battle. In the picture above is a general view of the beach, with German prisoners carrying boxes of medical supplies towards the waiting landing-craft

HOW the GREAT ADVANCE WAS LAUNCHED

Vivid Pictures from the Battle Zones in Normandy

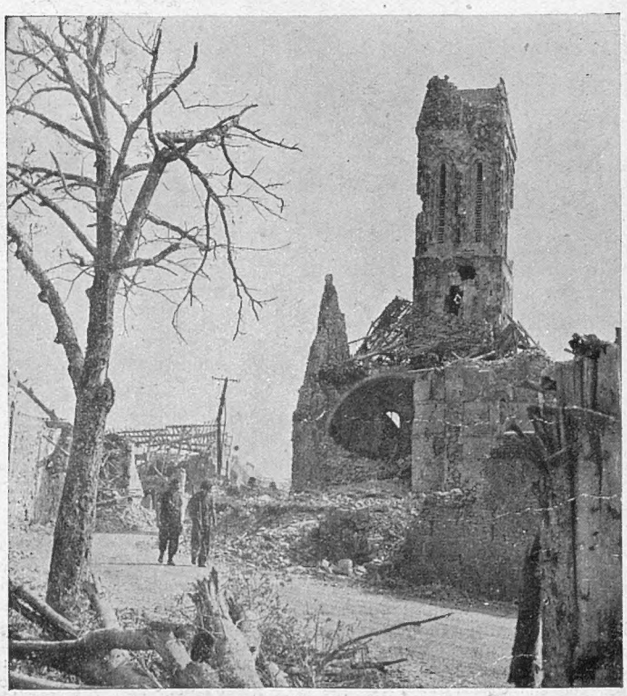
WHEN THE BIG PUSH SOUTH OF CAEN OPENED, 6,000 tons were dropped by Allied bombers to clear the way for the tanks and infantry. This picture was taken from the crest of a hill overlooking the village, whilst St. André-sur-Orne was receiving its terrific bombardment from 1,000 aircraft

ALL THAT REMAINS OF ONE TOWN ON THE ORNE RIVER: A bulldozer clears the way for the British advance through and beyond Aunay-sur-Odon. Rising out of the ruins of this famous French town is the ancient church, which was untouched. The rest of the town is absolutely flat, with hardly a wall standing. Out of the craters the Germans had made barriers and fortifications



ANOTHER IMPRESSION OF ST. ANDRÉ-SUR-ORNE at the height of the bombardment which heralded the big push. This was at the "hinge" of the German positions south of Caen: the aircraft assault began just before midnight on August 7

On left—Forty minutes on the night of August 7-8 (between 23.00 and 23.40 hours) made military history. Heavy bombers of R.A.F. Bomber Command, in great strength, literally blasted a path for Canadian armour and infantry to attack strongly-held German positions south of Caen, between St. André-sur-Orne and Hubert-Folie. The plan was that Bomber Command would take the role of artillery on an immense scale, pounding two lines of enemy strong-points while, actually during this air bombardment, the ground forces advanced down an "avenue" some three miles wide, between the bomb lines. It was intended that the ground forces would begin to move forward immediately the air assault began, and elaborate plans were made to provide "markers" to guide the armour and troops through the dust and smoke-obscured channel. While the bombers discharged their loads, streams of tracer and Very lights were fired over the heads of the ground forces, giving them, in effect, a compass bearing. Then a battery of searchlights went into action, pointing unwavering fingers low over the countryside into which the Canadians were advancing



DURING THE DRIVE TO FALAISE. A scene in the village of Rocquancourt, which is now a heap of rubble. It was captured by the Canadians, who then pressed on to the south, towards the important town of Falaise—and Paris

IN AVRANCHES: AMERICAN ARMOUR MOVES UP TO THE BRITTANY FRONT, through the picturesque, but war-torn town. This was a key-point on the west of the Allied front: it was captured by the Americans on August 1, who first swept south and then turned westward to overrun the whole of Brittany at lightning speed

THE WHOLE BATTLEFIELD IS ABLAZE: A dramatic picture on the Caen-Falaise road, showing men and transport halted whilst fires caused by the Allied bombing rage ahead. To the left is the long, straight road leading to Falaise and then on to Paris. Drawn up in the fields is every type of transport vehicle, waiting to reinforce the Army fighting ahead

THE ADVANCE TO VIRE. Bren-gun carriers, guns and troops prepare to cross the bridge spanning the River Soulevre. The concentration of armour and vehicles of all sorts was very considerable during this phase of the operations

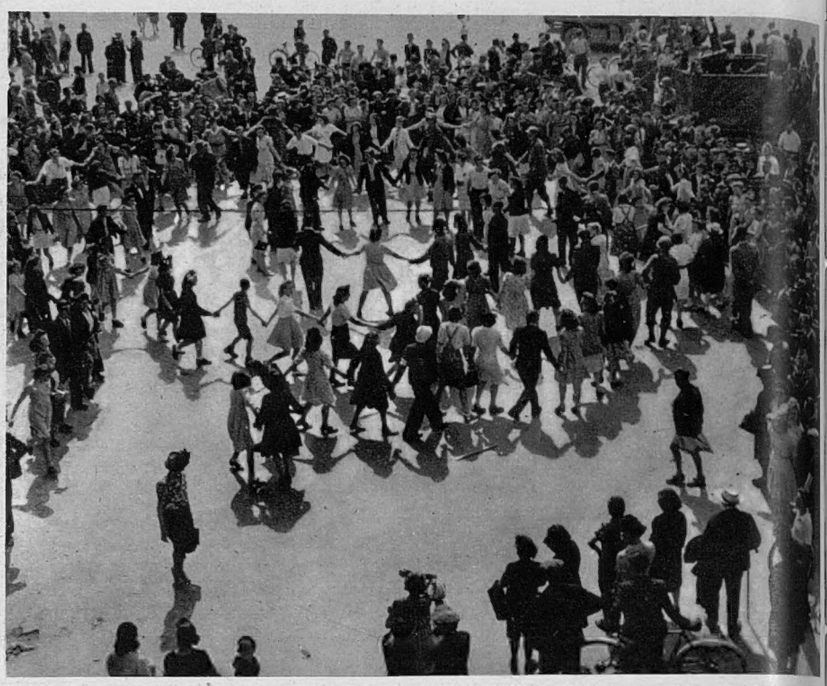
THE BRITISH DRIVE IN THE ST. MARTIN SECTOR. Everything was moving forward when this picture was taken, and the Germans were being pushed back fast. This is a good example of the scene of activity during a major operation

WHEN THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN, THE BRITISH AND CANADIAN TROOPS FORMING THE FIRST CANADIAN ARMY HAD ALMOST TORN AWAY THE "HINGE" OF THE GERMAN LINE BELOW CAEN and they were then about five miles from Falaise on the road to Paris. The armoured units seen above were moving up in clouds of dust towards the not-distant battlefield on the hills dimly seen in the background

The LIBERATION of RENNES

Scenes which are Being Enacted in Many Towns and Villages of France as They are Freed from the German Yoke

SPONTANEOUS DEMONSTRATION: A little band of French youths and girls marching across the city square at Rennes waving the Stars and Stripes after the entry of the American forces



U.S. SOLDIERS JOIN WITH FRENCH CIVILIANS IN DANCING to celebrate the liberation of the city after four years of German occupation. At 8.30 on the morning of August 4 American troops swept into the French town of Rennes. No sooner did the inhabitants realise that they were—at long last—free, than they spontaneously took part in demonstrations of joy. The city is almost untouched: everywhere the men and women, boys and girls, danced in the streets, waving the flags of the Allies, and manifesting delight at their deliverance. Similar scenes have already been witnessed in other French towns, but probably nowhere has the abandon been so great as in Rennes. As the American and British forces push deeper into France it is probable that scenes like these will be enacted elsewhere—and that the retribution meted out to the "collaborators" will be as severe as that depicted in the series of pictures reproduced on the facing page

MASS IN A NORMAN CHURCH. French villagers and American soldiers professing the same religion attend Sunday Mass together in the damaged church of Notre Dame de Cenily—a scene which is now being duplicated in many parts of the liberated regions

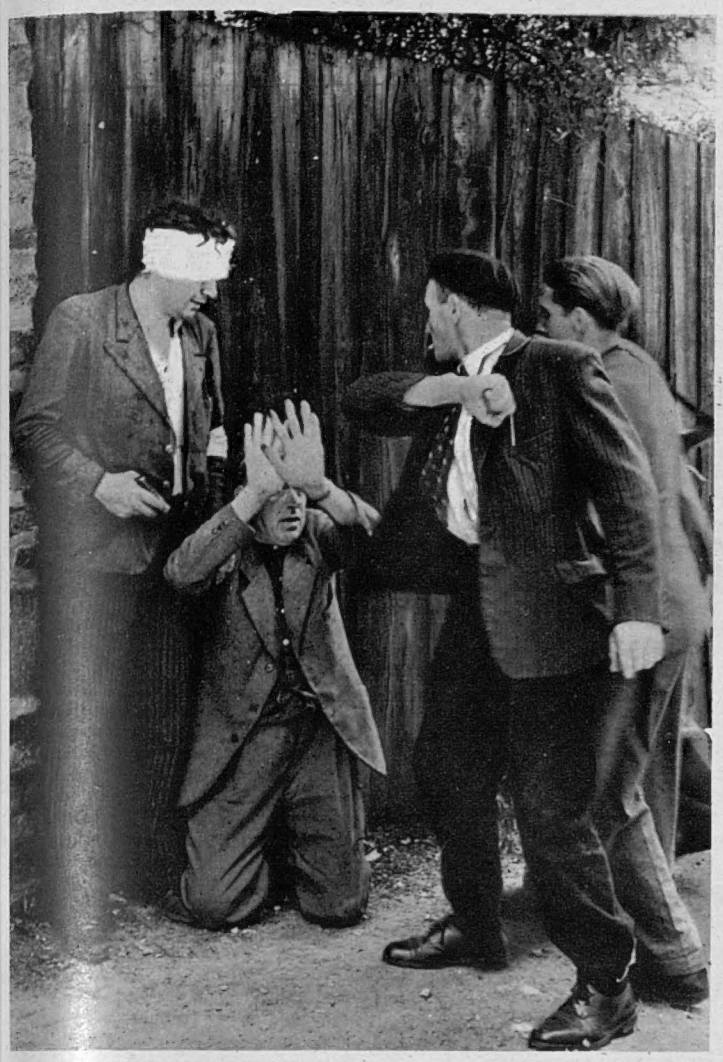
"VIVE DE GAULLE": A banner now spans the main street of the village of Tremblay, where the little town exhibits a carnival atmosphere as Allied troops pour through. The French inhabitants apparently know of de Gaulle and all he stands for through the radio

THE RALLYING OF THE "FRENCH FORCES OF THE INTERIOR"—a scene in Caen. Now that the Germans have been driven from their part of the country, French patriot forces can come up from underground and work openly with the Allied Military authorities in Caen. This picture shows the "Scamarone" company, formed from young volunteers, taking part in a ceremony in that city held in honour of their comrades killed in helping the Allied forces. Scamarone was a French official who was tortured to death by the Germans in vain efforts to extract information from him. Officials of the Forces Francaises de l'Interieur are here seen at the salute as the flag is raised

FRENCH PARTISANS COME OUT INTO THE OPEN. Two of them are here seen co-operating with the Americans searching for Nazi snipers during operations in a wood in Normandy. Their local knowledge has proved of great value in these tasks

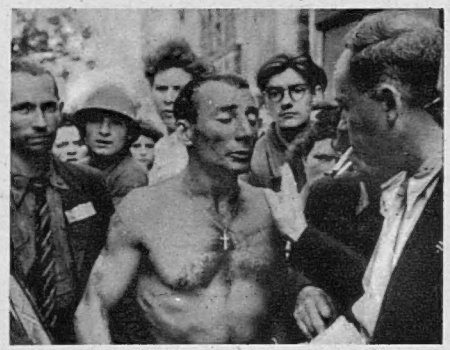
SCENES OF RIOTING IN RENNES

As the "Collaborators" and Quislings Were Rounded Up by Their Own Countrymen After the American Entry



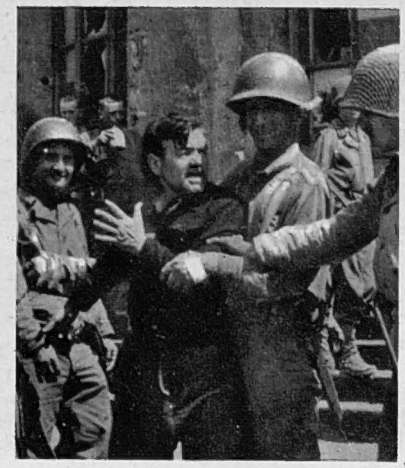
ONE OF MANY SIMILAR SCENES DURING THE RIOTS. A collaborator is forced to his knees and is about to be lashed by angry French patriots. He was repeatedly hit, and made to cry "Vive de Gaulle!" and "Vive la France!" until police rescued him. The man on the left (with bandaged head) holds a revolver in his hand

FORCED TO KNEEL ABJECTLY and shout praise of Churchill, de Gaulle, and the Allies. This man had openly identified himself with the enemy cause: he was made to pay for his treachery by his fellow-townsmen

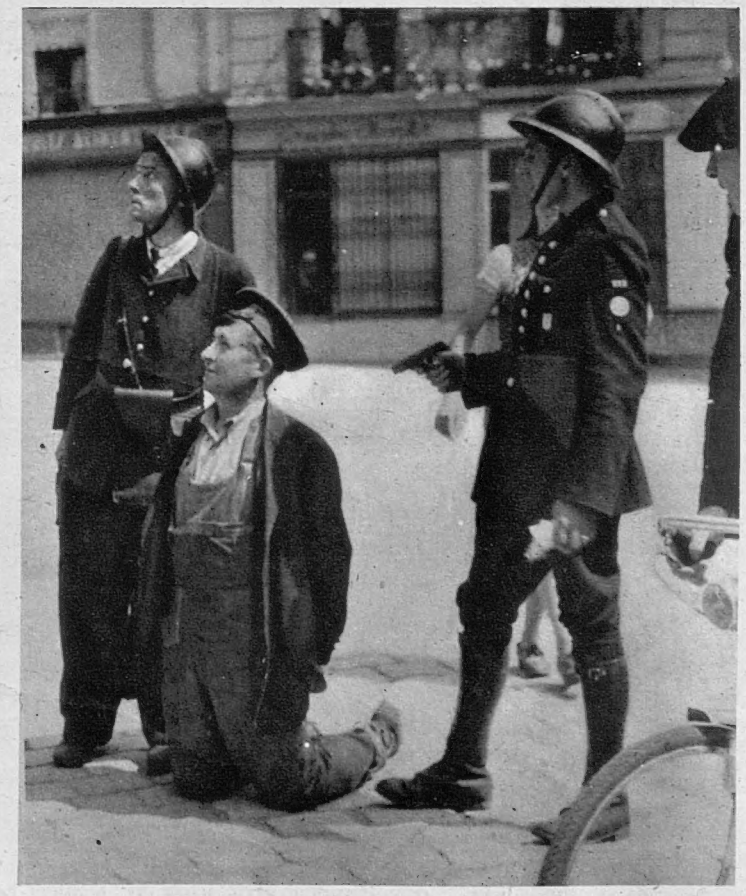


On left—**A FRENCH TRAITOR, whose shirt has been ripped from his back, is surrounded by angry patriots. One of the latter is looking through papers seized from him. Police later rescued this man and led him off to prison.** *On right*—**ANOTHER "COLLABORATOR" IS GRABBED BY THE HAIR by a French official and rushed off to the prison at Rennes**

THREE COLLABORATORS IN RENNES are rounded up by the French gendarmes and placed in custody for later proceedings against them. After the Germans had left Rennes in a hurry, the French populace took revenge of certain of their number known to have collaborated too openly with the enemy. Some ugly scenes occurred, during the course of which the pictures reproduced here were taken. Some of the men attacked by the crowd were very roughly handled, and would have suffered more but for the intervention of the local police. Freed from restraint, and after four years of German oppression, the patriots were only too anxious to pay off a few old scores. It is likely that many of the collaborationist victims will later have to stand trial for their misdeeds and treachery



On right—**NOT A COLLABORATOR.** This fierce-looking, active Frenchman was not under arrest. He was trying to get at a number of German prisoners sitting on the steps of the City Hall in Rennes, but was restrained by the American guards



THIS MAN IS ALLEGED TO HAVE WORKED WITH THE GERMAN GESTAPO. He was placed "on show" in Rennes, but was guarded during that time by the French police, who later gaoled him. Like the other traitors, he was forced to cry "Vive le France!", "Vive Churchill!" and "Vive de Gaulle!"

BACK TO THE HISTORY-LADEN LOIRE

The Pleasant Land of Touraine, Through which the Allied Armies are Passing on the Way to Paris

Described by FERDINAND TUOHY

WHATEVER turns the campaign in France may take—and a week could change the face of it—the Loire Valley demonstrably enters the picture and cannot fail to interest large numbers of American and British troops of all categories as a region apart, something special in French life and lore.

From dimmest history the Loire between Orleans and Nantes has been a governing factor in wars waged on French soil. Time and again decisive battles have either been fought or prepared along its banks, which constitute as near a dividing line between the North and the South as any other topographical feature. The French of the North may hymn the Seine, and those of the South, the Rhône, yet each category knows that the Loire can outgeneral Seine and Rhône in war, even as it is richer than either in history.

The Valley of the Loire is as capable now of swaying a French campaign as it was when it served as the strategic base of the English occupation in the Hundred Years War.

The Loire has already been used since D-Day for boxing off the Germans in Normandy and Brittany (by the bombing of its many bridges); as I write, the Valley may be about to be used for any one of three further purposes of capital import, perhaps for all three.

Should affairs march at their best for us, the advance on Paris and, circuitously, to the "tank" country of the Marne and Champagne, will probably rest on the Loire Valley. Again, three great main lines from the West, the South-West (Bordeaux) and the Centre and South (Toulouse) converge on the Loire, the first two at or near Tours, and the third at Orleans. Once these and their adjacent arterial highways are cut, all the Germans throughout West, South-West, Central and Pyrénéan France will have to go round by Vichy and even Lyons to connect with Paris or the North, and we may be sure that Allied bombing and Maquis wrecking will render such connections duly precarious. Reinforcements for Kluge will be among those having to do the roundabout routes. And thirdly, no doubt, it will be up the Loire from the ports of Nantes and St. Nazaire that a large portion of immense American war supplies will journey, by road and rail if not by water, as soon as the Breton overrunning is straightened out.

Possession of the Loire Valley will weaken the Germans in other respects. They contrived important war factories in the urban centres, particularly in the Nantes Estuary, where the French had their biggest aircraft output; some of the largest German airfields fringe the Valley; and the whole region has provided the enemy with endless farm produce. If the glittering strategic and political prize of Paris constantly beckons the Army of Liberation, the Valley of the Loire is a second reward more accessible and only less valuable.

For present purposes, the river need be taken into account only from where it turns left, at Orleans, and flows for about 150 miles down to Nantes. It rises in the Central Massif on the far side of Vichy, and throughout its length there is one drawback which will be felt again now, as in 1918, when the Americans last unloaded and forwarded vast war material. This often majestic waterway is not navigable. It silts up constantly from shallow sand and clay. It dawdles muddily along, most times a third to half as wide again as the Thames at Chelsea. There is something of the American river about the Loire—a sort of Old Man River like the Mississippi. Treacherous currents can overwhelm, while a bad storm will cause disastrous flooding over low-lying banks.

But, if this river of curves is more or less useless save for fishing, washing clothes and bathing, the towns and fields on either bank make up for it. Irrationally known to countless foreigners as "Touraine," the Valley really descends from the plain of Beauce, above Orleans, which gives Paris its vegetables and gave Zola his primitive folk for *La Terre*. From Blois westward, the scenery becomes greener and lusher, well qualifying the Valley's label as "The Garden of France." Every kind of vegetable, cereal and flower thrives in this earth and gentle climate. Life rests more easily than in the north, and the fact is discernible in the inhabitants, product of genial French country life at its best. So genial, that hundreds of folk live as troglodytes not far upstream from Tours, in cliff and quarry caves turned into veritable "houses": happy homes in the bombing age. Yet Tours itself, "capital of the châteaux country," is known for its culture and accent—the latter reputed the best in France. Though better known are the vineyards of the Loire, harmonising with the benign, distinguished surroundings.

HOW THE TERRITORY OF TOURAINE HAS BEEN "BOXED IN" BY ALLIED BOMBERS. This wrecked structure is the Tours la Riche railway bridge at Tours, after a recent daylight attack by Marauders of the U.S. Ninth Air Force. Several direct hits tumbled the centre span into the Loire River and halted the movement of Rommel's much-needed supplies and reinforcements heading north to the Normandy battlefront. Evidence of the importance of this bridge to the Germans is provided in this reconnaissance photograph: it shows that a crane had been brought up and was engaged in clearance work less than forty-eight hours after the last Marauder had hit its mark

Pink, red, white, faintly bubbling (*pétillant*) and still, Loire wines are short-lived, but lots of French people and foreigners prefer them to the much dearer classified growths. The once delectable Vouvray was vulgarised beyond recognition thanks to *le Tourism* after the last war, and to-day Saumur's Rosé and Côte de Layon are as good as any. Saumur, lovely old white Saumur, is the place to summon the Loire's greatest figure, Rabelais, over a local soft Rosé of Anjou—said to have been his favourite. And while on Saumur, let horsy ones in the Armies not fail to visit the unique equine museum with its skeleton of Flying Fox.

What there is to see in this fair land where present and past keep colliding! Only the other day, while Tours was being bombed in helpless turmoil, Ministers of France and Britain met in vain at a nearby château; even as, again only the other day, a hundred correspondents had focused the world's attention on a second château and the marriage of a former king. It was upon the Loire that Joffre wished to fall back in 1914, and would have done so but for Gallièni in Paris. A River of History, the Loire.

Here the first Capet kings joined issue with the feudal barons; here was the happy hunting-ground of the Plantagenets; here the English sortie base in the Hundred Years War, and the external rendezvous of the Italian Renaissance and eventually its final resting-place. The Renaissance greets us in the residential châteaux, the names of which are widely familiar: noble, riverside Amboise, where Charles VIII "died a strange death"; Catharine de Medici's Chaumont; italianate Blois, of crime notoriety; fairy-castle Chenonceaux, built across a river bridgewise; my favourite Azay in its watered park; Villandry and its medieval gardens; Talleyrand's Valencay; Chambord, veritable city of small roofs.

To name the châteaux of the Loire is almost to evoke, chapter by chapter, the history of France. They embody the rise and fall of the feudal system; from the decrepit ruins of Sancerre, to the huge, grim citadel of Angers, Plantagenet capital. From St. Benoit Abbey to that of Fontévrault, the banks are studded with Romanesque gems of architecture, sometimes set away in deep woods for which the Valley is renowned. Few rivers can have a finer wooded stretch than that facing the city of Tours, grown to be a bustling agricultural capital in normal times. Barely thirty years ago, it was the calmest old place beloved by Anglo-Indians in retirement, among others.

The reaches of the Loire are lined with landmarks of the Middle Ages. The rugged splendour of Sully; Jargeau, where Joan got her wound; the castles of Orleans, Chinon, Loches, Saumur, and many another. Some of these relics must assuredly have been shaken by 1940 and 1944 bombing; otherwise the last they heard of war was in 1871, when Gambetta's Army of the Loire heroically held out and even won battles from Tours.

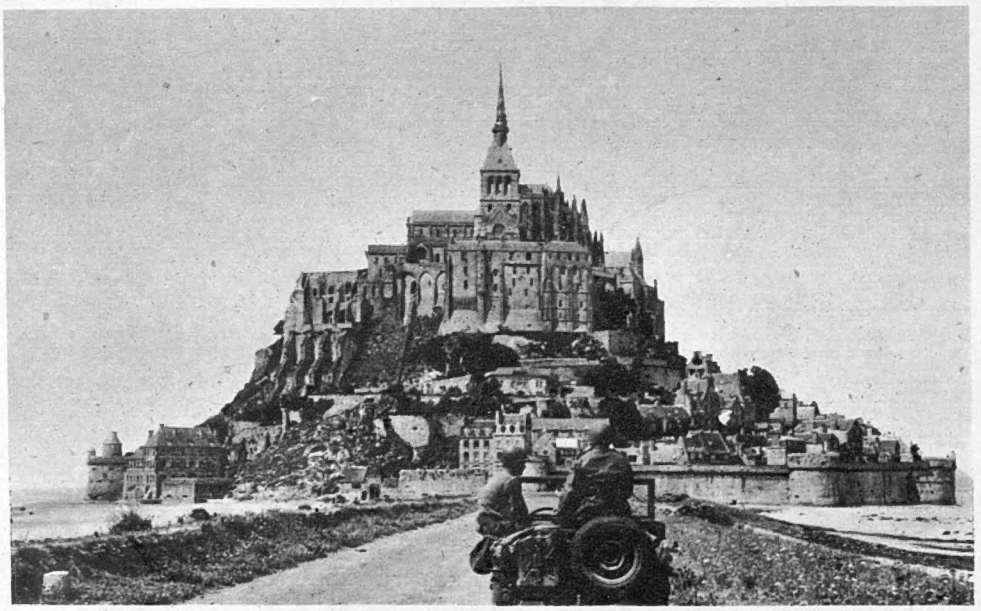
The picture of the Loire flattens and tends to become industrial as the river approaches the much-bombed city of Nantes. Yet the surrounding country has a forlorn and "lost" kind of splendour of its own, together with a magical play of colour and reflections which captivated Turner, the first painter of any country to see the painting merits of the Estuary and its sunsets. Turner took his easel thither several years in succession.

To this day, this primitive, sad region summons to mind the Marshal Gilles de Rais, who rode the Estuary like a devil in the fifteenth century. At his grotesquely delayed trial he admitted to killing over 300 people, mostly boys, just for the fun, interest or perversity of the thing. Before being executed, he wrote incredibly frank confessions.

And that reminds of yet another attribute to which the Loire may justly lay claim: it has long been a great literary river. Tasso and Leonardo journeyed thither; here was written the trail-blazing *Roman de la Rose*; and afterwards came Rabelais and Ronsard; and there followed Balzac, and after him, Anatole France. Just to mention the highest lights.

British and Americans will find much to interest and delight them along and adjacent to the Valley of the Loire. Not least should they notice, even now, how the people of Touraine, Anjou and Poitou have conserved something of a sunnier age.

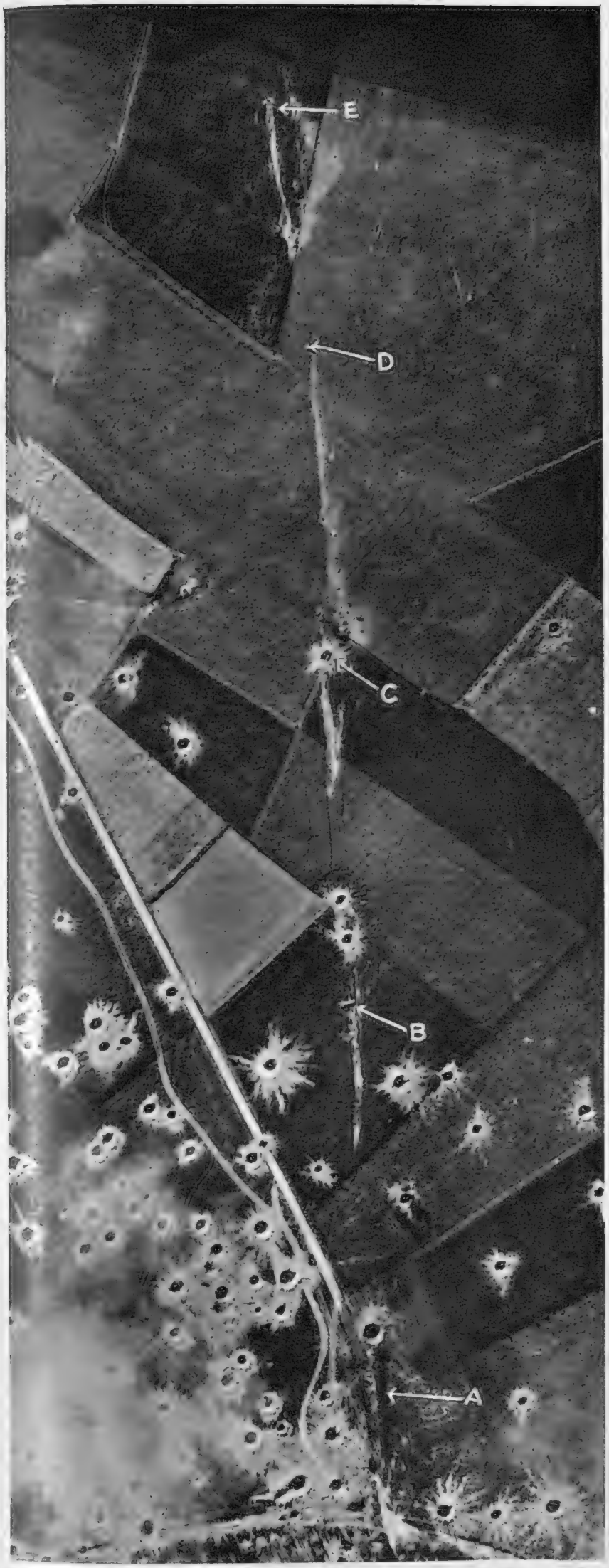
Before the war much of the Loire Valley leaned to conservatism tinged by royalism—as in Anjou, last royalist fief. Except for the populous centres like Nantes and Tours, it was not a "Left" region. For one thing, the château and the *curé* influence survived. But politics will have changed here, as everywhere else in France.



THE LIBERATION OF MONT ST. MICHEL, famous show-place of Northern France. Like a ripe plum, this historic spot off the coast fell into the hands of the Americans as they drove from the Cherbourg Peninsula into the heart of Brittany. It was found to be unharmed by the Germans, the war in those parts moving too swiftly for any of their usual demolitions. Of all the places in Northern France this was the best known to British visitors before the war. Here a jeep is seen halted on the causeway leading to the historic castle

HITTING AT THE BOMB BASES

An Impressive Picture from the Pas de Calais; and Pictures of the Course of a Flying Bomb



FLYING BOMBS CRASH AS THEY ARE LAUNCHED: A reconnaissance photograph of a bomb site in the Pas de Calais area after it had been attacked by Allied aircraft. At the spot marked A is the launching-ramp, surrounded by bomb craters. B, C, D and E are flying bombs which have crashed just after they were launched: the streaks behind the bombs show where they have slid along the ground. Three of them are intact, but the fourth has exploded before ever it got into the air. The Germans themselves have admitted that this sometimes happens to their V1 weapon: by "sometimes" they apparently mean "often," because they have also given details of the special clothing worn by the launching crews to protect them against this very thing

1—A FLYING BOMB REACHES LONDON. With its fiery tail clearly visible, the missile roars overhead as it nears its objective. This picture was taken from a roof-top in Fleet Street

2—ABOVE THE LAW COURTS: The engine has cut out and the flying bomb is hurtling downwards at a steep angle. It fell in a side road off Drury Lane, blasting, among other buildings, the offices of the "Daily Herald"

3—AFTER THE EXPLOSION: the cloud of black smoke mushrooms skywards—a characteristic feature. In the foreground is the Law Courts. The three pictures reproduced here are the first to be released by the Censor showing a flying bomb actually crashing in Central London. The distinctive skyline of London's Law Courts clearly locates the scene of the "incident." Falling in a side road off the famous Drury Lane, this particular bomb blasted a number of buildings, including the *Daily Herald* offices. The pictures show the three characteristics of all flying bombs: after the roar of the engine, an unmistakable sound, comes the fiery glow from the tail as the missile hurtles overhead. Next, the flying bomb dives steeply to earth as the engine cuts out; then, after the loud explosion, up goes a cloud of black smoke, to mark the spot where the bomb fell

NEW PICTURES FROM ITALY

The Allied Entry into Florence; and the Civilian Revolt against Fascism and the Fascists

THE FALL OF FLORENCE: South Africans enter the city in the early hours of August 4 and take up on their tanks enthusiastic young Florentines

South African troops of the Eighth Army, who were supported by British Guardsmen, fought their way into the outskirts of Florence early in the morning of August 4. The Germans had been beaten back step by step, and finally they had retreated across the Arno River, blowing up five of the six bridges as they went. The Florentines gave a rapturous welcome to the British and Empire troops and helped them in every way possible. For a time, only half the city was held by the Allies, the other half being occupied by the determined German parachute troops, who sniped incessantly. The historic city, in fact, became a city of snipers, amongst which many civilians still persisted in pursuing their normal avocations. Here, as elsewhere in Italy, the revulsion against Fascism and the Fascists appeared to be complete—and convincing

ANTI-FASCIST ITALIANS IN THE STREETS OF FLORENCE engage Fascist and German snipers after the Allied entry

THIS IS ONLY ONE OF THE THOUSANDS OF DEMOLITIONS WHICH THE ALLIES HAVE HAD TO FACE during their advance up the Italian mainland to Florence. When this picture was taken, the Royal Engineers were working ahead of the forward infantry, clearing a path through the rubble left after a bridge had been blown by the Germans. Just three tanks stood between the Sappers and the enemy, but with an ordinary-type bulldozer the men worked feverishly to allow further armour to push through after the retreating enemy

THE ITALIAN PARTISANS CAPTURE A FASCIST : Bisini Guido, of the village of Ciggiano, was a Fascist who assisted the Germans in a number of ways : he helped them by carrying petrol and other supplies in his farm wagons, and he is strongly suspected of having betrayed British prisoners of war to the enemy. His capture in the woods surrounding the village was regarded as a crowning success for the local partisans. As in France, so in Italy : those people prominently identified with the enemy regime are now reaping the reward for their "collaboration"

THE FIRST OFFICIAL MEETING OF THE NEW ITALIAN GOVERNMENT IN ROME : After the departure of Marshal Badoglio from the Premiership and the abdication of King Victor Emmanuel, Signor Bonomi was invited to form an all-party Ministry. At first the new Government met in Salerno, until conditions in Rome were fully under Allied control. When the occupation of the capital had been finally achieved, Signor Bonomi and his Ministers then returned. Seated at the head of the table is Signor Ivanoe Bonomi, Premier ; from left to right, from the left corner, are—General Piacentini, Minister for Air ; the Marchese Alessandro Casati, Minister for War ; Signor Umberto Tupini, Minister of Justice ; Signor de Gasperi ; Signor Ruini ; and Count Sforza—all three Ministers without Portfolios. Seated on the Premier's left, and round the table from him, are—the Premier's Secretary ; Signor Cianca ; Signor Togliatti ; Signor Mancini—all Ministers without Portfolio ; Signor Soleri, Minister of the Treasury ; and Admiral de Courten, Minister of Marine

GURKHAS OF THE EIGHTH ARMY ON MONTE CASTIGLIONE facing the Germans' "Gothic Line" : An Indian Division is now fighting in the central mountain sector to the right of Florence. Though their positions are south of the city, they are the nearest to the formidable Gothic Line. With the capture of Monte Castiglione, a height of 2,400 ft., these Indian troops were able to overlook the enemy's forward posts and to face the first bastion of the Gothic Line, Alpi di Catensia, nearly 4,000 ft. high. *Above*—A section is seen moving down through the rocks and boulders on Castiglione. *Below* is depicted an incident in which a company of the Gurkhas took part : when they had taken this highest point on the ridge, and were being fiercely counter-attacked, mortared and machine-gunned, the Company cook appeared on the scene. With typical Gurkha courage, he voluntarily began taking tea to the trench positions in the midst of the battle. His supply exhausted, he vanished —only to reappear with more

THE ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER APPEARS IN ROME : Recently, a special Service was held in St. Peter's Church for Allied troops in the Italian capital. It was conducted by Cardinal Tedeshini, and the Archbishop of Westminster was present. After the service the troops toured the interior of the historic Church : above, a number of them are waiting to kneel before the Archbishop and kiss his Ring. Dr. Griffin, the recently elected Archbishop of Westminster, flew to Rome a few weeks ago to confer with the Pope

THE FORMER FASCIST POLICE CHIEF, injured when trying to escape from Rome : Pietro Caruso, chief of the Fascist Questrea before the entry of the Allies, is now a prisoner in the Regina Coeli Prison. He was wounded whilst trying to make a getaway from the city just before its capture. It is probable that he will have to stand trial for the many misdeeds he carried out during the Fascist and German reigns in Rome

AIR ACTION OVER THE FALAISE DISTRICT BEHIND THE CAEN BATTLE AREA: British bombers attacking an industrial suburb near which many combats with the "Luftwaffe" have taken place—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

AIR OPERATIONS over the NORMANDY BATTLEFIELDS

Special "Sphere" Drawings of Phases of the Recent Fighting

Falaise is one of the most historic towns of Normandy: it is here that William the Conqueror was born. The modern suburb of the Old Town has been heavily bombed, and many air fights have taken place with the *Luftwaffe* when they have appeared over this area from time to time. Allied fighter aircraft have scored notable successes around Falaise. The bombing has been directed against targets in the main suburb of Guibray, shown to the right in the above view. This lies on rising ground to the east of the famous chateau on its rocky ridge, well known to hosts of visitors from this country who have toured Normandy. As a position on the main Argentan highway it is of strategic importance. The old chateau and the ancient houses of the Lower Town are well away from the suburban area, so they have not been damaged by the air bombardment. For many centuries Falaise saw much warfare, constantly being captured and recaptured. Alongside the great square keep stands the circular Tour Talbot, named apparently after the English leader of the time of the Siege of Orleans, although the tower was built long before his time. There are two churches along the ridge of the hill, Ste. Trinite and St. Gervais. The latter has a bold, strikingly rich exterior

THE CHATEAU HEADQUARTERS OF THE GERMANS ATTACKED. The Chateau Beauville, on the road to Caen, is set on fire by rocket projectiles from British aircraft—only one of many instances where the local enemy Command has been dislocated by this means during the recent fighting in Normandy—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

On right—On several occasions during recent operations in Normandy, great enemy activity has been observed around some of the chateaux with which the French countryside is dotted. These chateaux are usually set in a woodland surrounding, with one face open to the sun. Attacks by the Allies on German-occupied buildings of this character have been made sometimes by our land forces; on other occasions the attack has been delivered from the air, the chateau being hit by rocket-firing Typhoons, as in the case illustrated here.

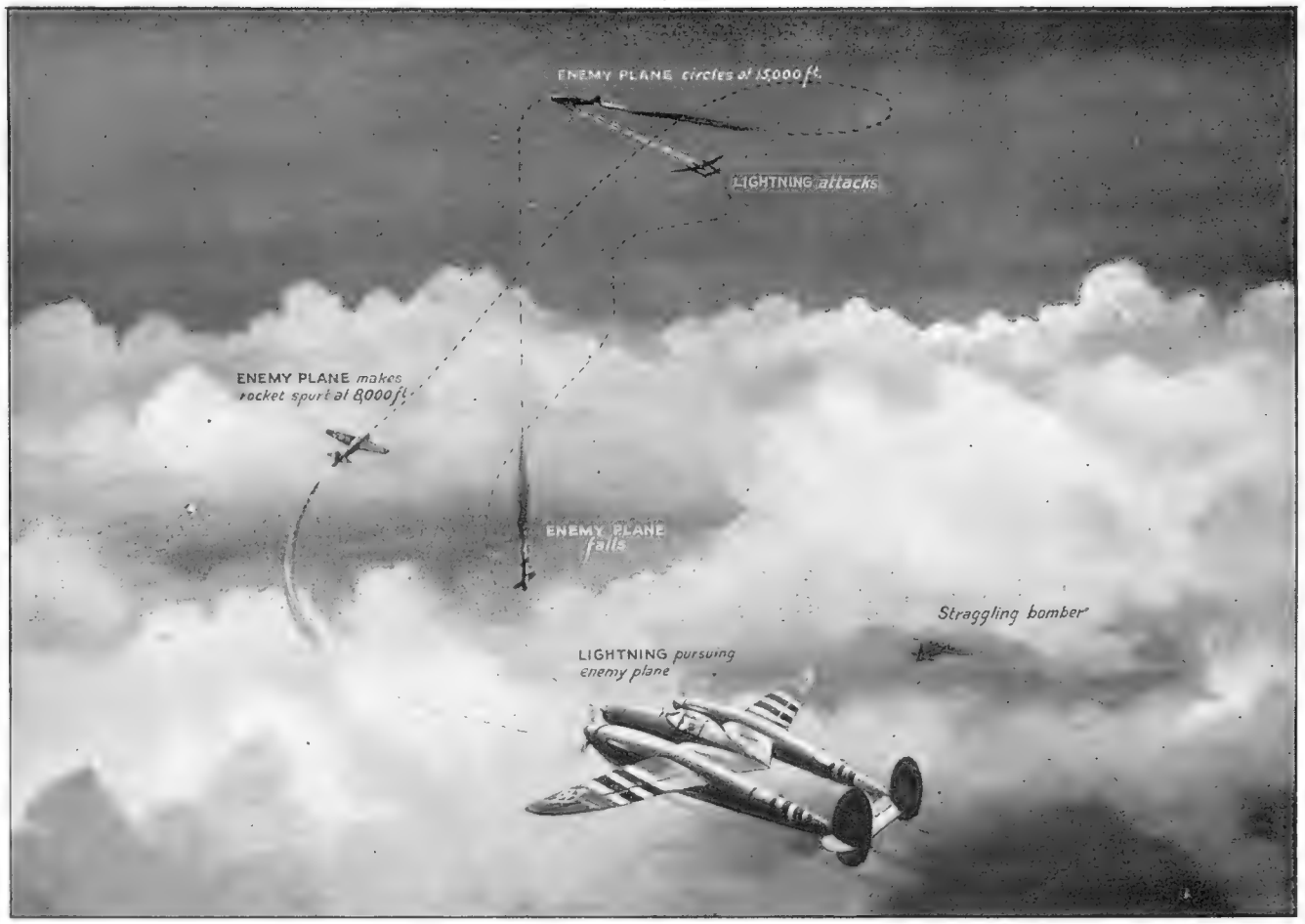
The Typhoons swooped low on their target, the Chateau Beauville, which lies to the south of the Caen fighting line. The building was wrecked and set on fire, the flames lighting up the surrounding woods. At Esquay, a similar German H.Q. was strafed by Typhoons, on this occasion with cannon-fire. A few days ago, a chateau headquarters was shot up by Mosquito fighter-bombers of a Tactical Force Wing. This chateau target was some 200 miles from the French coast and lay close to a dense wood, in which the enemy was encamped in huts and tents. There was no fighter opposition, but some flak from the woods. The building was left a smoking ruin; as the Squadron Leader remarked: "There was very little chateau and quite a number of dead Germans."

On right—It is now known that the Germans are using rocket-propelled fighter aircraft. These have been designated Me. 163. In one instance a single aircraft thus equipped was encountered by fighters of the U.S. Eighth Air Force; in another, five of them came up to give battle. The American pilots were escorting Flying Fortresses and Liberators to attack the Leuna synthetic oil refinery at Merseburg and other targets in Germany. An American Captain, flying a Lightning, drove off the single Me. 163 as it was trying to attack a straggling bomber from the rear.

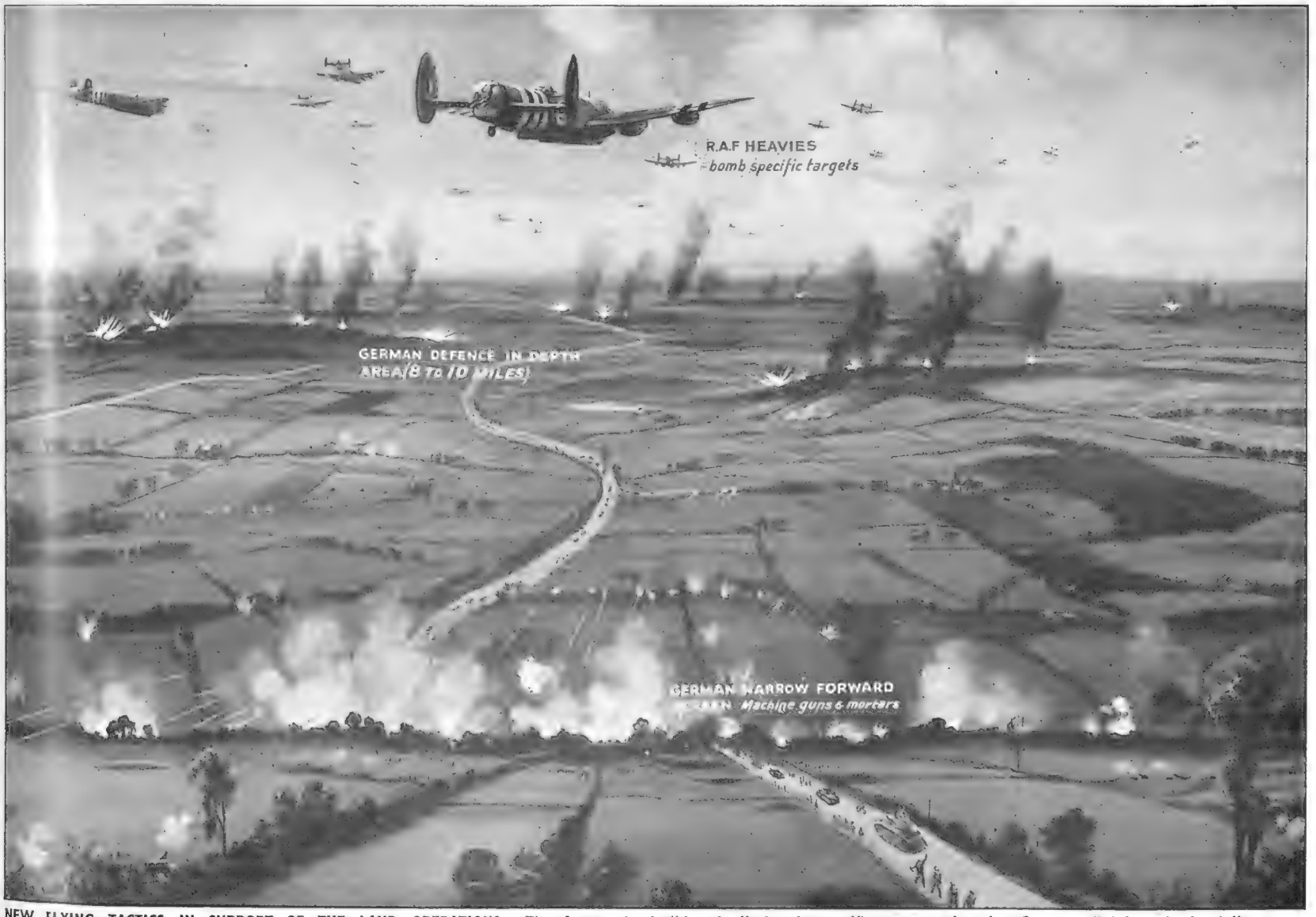
The pilot reported that the German rocket plane dived to the left and that he followed. At about 8,000 ft. the German pilot pulled up and started to climb, using his rocket power intermittently. At approximately 15,000 ft. the Me. 163 ceased climbing and went into a circle. The American could see his armour-piercing incendiaries hitting home; and the rocket plane went straight down.

Rocket-propelled planes differ from jet-propelled aircraft in that the oxygen which helps to power them is carried aboard in chemical combination with other elements, instead of being taken from the air through which the plane passes. The engine can thus be "boosted" up tremendously for short periods—a great advantage in aerial combat.

In the drawing given on the right our artist has depicted the various stages of the combat between the American and German aircraft up to the moment when the latter was shot down.

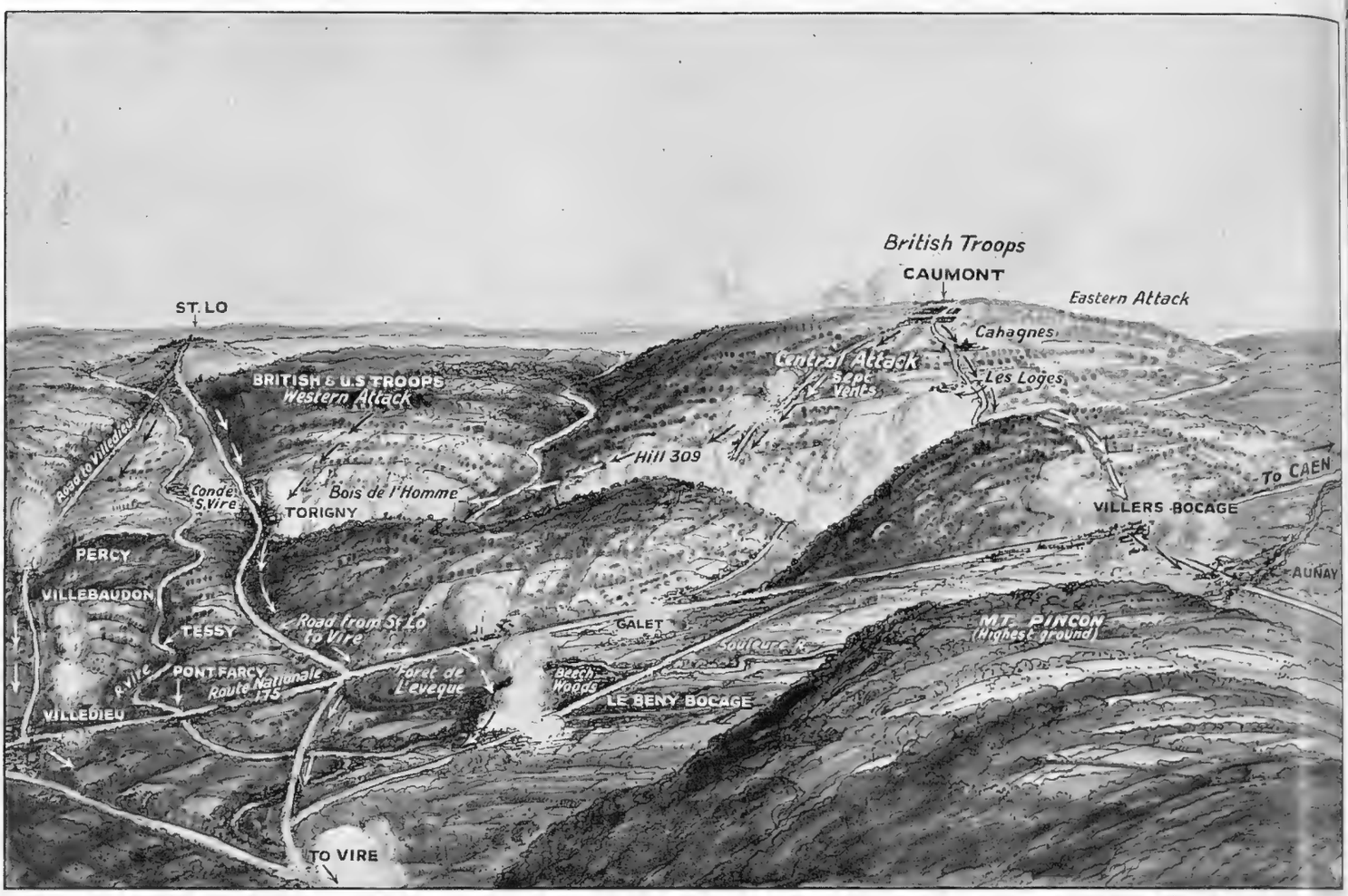


THE GERMANS ARE USING ROCKET PLANES: A fight between an Allied twin-engined Lightning and an enemy rocket-driven fighter, an Me. 163. By means of its rockets, each enemy aircraft thus equipped is able to "boost" its flight very considerably
—Drawing by Roland Davies (see notes at left)



NEW FLYING TACTICS IN SUPPORT OF THE LAND OPERATIONS: The four-engined "heavies" bomb specific targets in the German "defence-in-depth" area—a development of the co-operation between Air Force and Army on the Normandy battlefield—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

To-day, when the infantry attack in Normandy, they know that the enemy's strong-points and defensive areas are simultaneously being battered by the "heavies" of the Allied Air Forces. This is the latest development in our method of warfare brought about by our undoubted and terrific superiority over the *Luftwaffe*. When the big attack south of Caumont developed, this is what happened: most of the infantry units went in to the attack between six and seven o'clock in the morning: at about 7.30, the first of more than 1,000 bombers reached Normandy from English bases and dropped a terrific load on the enemy defences. Their targets were among the wooded hill features south of Caumont and some distance from the German front line. For it was thought that the enemy strength on this sector would lie a distance to the rear among tree-covered hills and depressions which favoured the defenders. The heavy bombers did their work as our troops were moving forward towards their first objectives and they were followed later in the morning by a large force of mediums. The Lancasters dropped a great weight of bombs and so did the medium bombers which followed. But for some hours—till afternoon, in fact—the cloud was too bad for fighter-bombers to operate in close support of the ground forces. But then they *did* get busy!



HOW THE TRIPLE ATTACK DEVELOPED FROM CAUMONT AND ST. LO. The British Army pushed south through Villers Bocage and captured Mount Pincon, the highest ground in the district: whilst a British and American Army drove down from St. Lo towards Route Nationale 175 and Le Beny Bocage and other now-famous villages and towns in the direction of Vire. These attacks are indicated by arrows (See notes below)—*Drawing by Percy Home*

The GREAT DOUBLE ONSLAUGHT ON THE NAZIS

The British Attack through Caumont, and the American Attack through Le Mans

Two Special Sphere Diagram-Drawings

After remaining in a static condition for several weeks, the front around Caumont, at the Caen end of the line, burst into violent activity coincident with the deep thrusts of the American forces through Granville-Avranches, at the other end.

Three separate attacks developed when this period of activity began. The one towards the east proved the most difficult of them all. It led southwards through Cahagnes and the village of Les Loges over some undulating ground towards St. Pierre de Fresne, another village, or townlet, astride Route Nationale 175. A little to the left lies the village of Villers Bocage, which was reached quite early after D-Day, but from which no further advance had been made in the intervening period. (As one of the pictures given here demonstates, this town has been reduced almost to pulp during the savage fighting which has taken place there continously.)

The enemy offered very stiff resistance at every point on this route, but later despatches spoke of fighting at Aunay, so evidently progress had been made.

The central attack proceeded almost due south from Caumont, down the slope of the hill towards the Bois de l'Homme, a wooded ridge which proved a very stiff obstacle. Its highest point, however, Hill 309, was captured by Churchill tanks. This paved the way for the subsequent capture of Mt. Pincon, highest and most important point in this whole area. Almost at the same time the village of St. Martin des Besaces was captured from the enemy.

The third, or westerly, attack proved the most successful in penetrating the enemy's defence lines. Here the British right flank worked in conjunction with the Americans' left, and together these troops were able to advance down both sides of the Vire. The British troops struck south-west from Caumont and succeeded in crossing the Route Nationale by way of the Forêt de l'Evêque and the dense beechwood in the neighbourhood of Le Beny Bocage. The British and Americans joined hands after crossing the Souleure River, a tributary of the Vire.

In the left foreground of the drawing above can be seen the town of Villedieu, reached by way of Percy and Villebaudon. Torigny and Tessy were also occupied, and combined pressure was directed on the picturesque town of Vire. In the right foreground is indicated the high ground of Mt. Pincon, the highest stretch of hill country in this neighbourhood.

AFTER THE CAPTURE OF THE STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT TOWN OF VILLERS BOCAGE. This is now a place of shattered houses and bomb-cratered streets. When in their possession, the Germans converted the town into a strong-point in their general defensive system, and the Royal Air Force had to be called in to soften the position. The accuracy of the British bombing is indisputable, the main street being pitted from end to end with craters, many of them 50 ft. across. In this picture, a wrecked Tiger tank is seen on the brink of one of the latter: all about lies the rubble which is all that now remains of the Norman town

The Advance into Touraine

The amazing speed of the American columns, which have dashed east, south and west since the taking of Avranches has carried them through many interesting old towns in Normandy and Brittany. So rapid has been the advance, so complete the surprise of the enemy, that there has been no time for demolition and no necessity for bombing or shelling by the Allies. This has spared both the inhabitants and the towns the sad fate of Caen.

The wide stretch of country shown in the drawing below is concerned chiefly with the eastward thrust—Rennes, a vital centre of road and rail communication lying just to the west. This was entered on August 3 by an American spearhead, which was met on the main road by 1,000 German soldiers, led by their officers, carrying white flags. Some fighting took place in the city, but it was soon over when the armoured units and infantry followed on behind the spearhead of tanks and armoured cars.

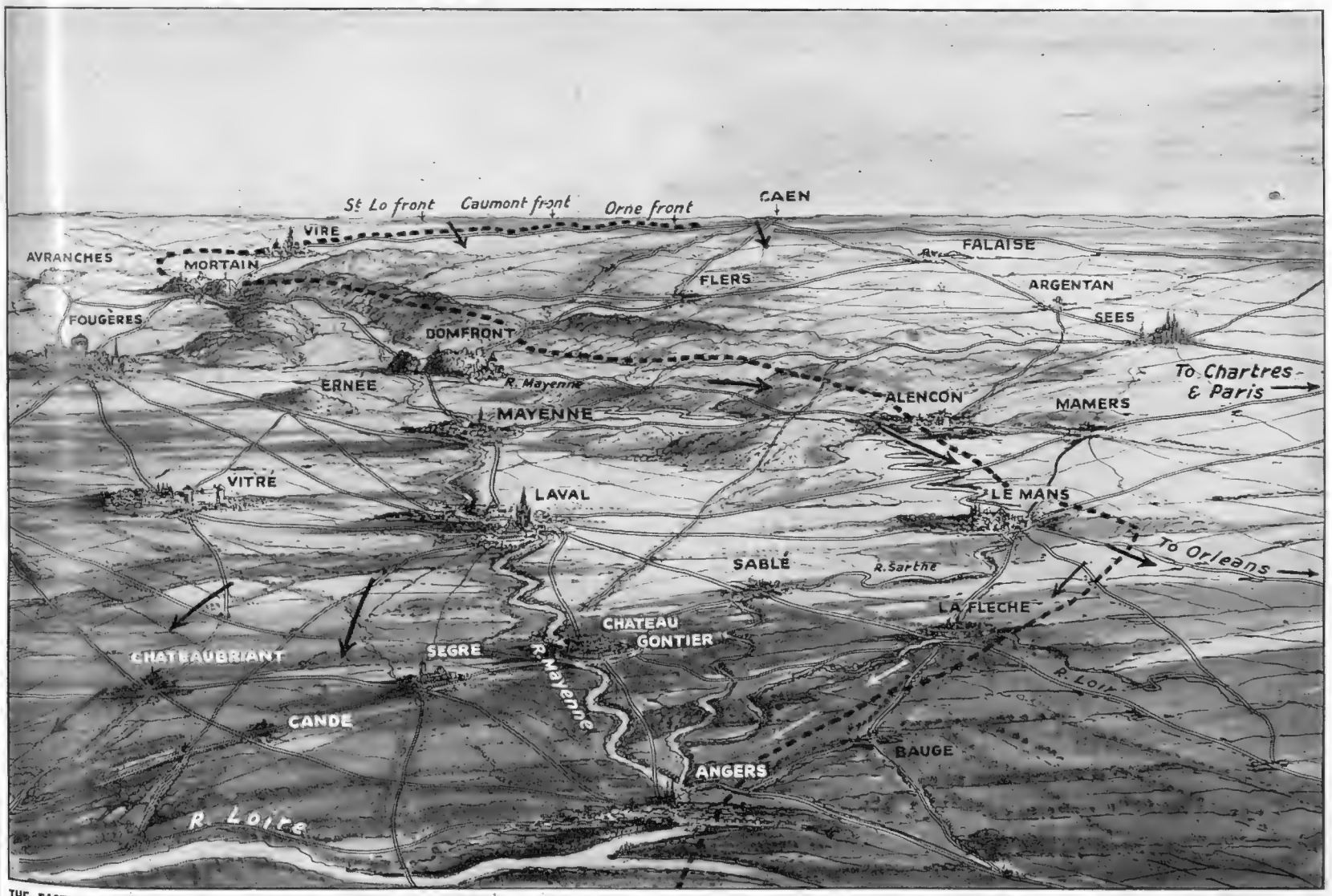
The attractive little town of Mortain (south of Vire) was entered by American patrols on August 4 after high ground had been gained north of the town. It consists of one long street climbing up a very steep hill, with the ruins of a castle standing near the river below the town. The church of St. Evroult, of late transitional Norman period, has its tower standing apart from it, in the manner of Italian campaniles. The Germans retook Mortain when they made a desperate counter-attack, with four Panzer divisions, trying to drive a wedge at Avranches to separate the Allied armies.

Fougeres was taken on August 5 when the Americans were rushing forward to Mayenne. It still possesses much of its old fortified walls, and its ruined castle is one of the best examples remaining in Brittany of a feudal stronghold. There are thirteen towers along the ramparts, and the three gateways, also defended by towers, stand above the moat. The old part of the town stands upon a hill, with the new town below it in the valley of the Nancon.

When the American spearhead swept into Mayenne, south-east of Fougeres, their arrival was so swift that the Germans were surprised, and though one bridge was blown up, they had not time to demolish the other bridge, over which the American tanks poured. A lorry-load of Germans arrived later in the day expecting to sleep there, only to find the Americans in occupation. The town stands on the slopes of hills on both sides of the River Mayenne. It possesses an old chateau, taken by William, Duke of Normandy, when he was fighting to maintain his dukedom, and the fine Norman church of Notre-Dame.

Laval, lying south-west of Mayenne, was taken on the same day (August 6) in the swift forward rush. It stands on the highway to Paris, with the River Mayenne separating the old and new portions of the town. It possesses a cathedral, founded in the twelfth century, an old castle of the same period, and one of the gateways, the Porte Beucheresse. Laval was long famous for linen manufacture. The Mayenne River, which has figured frequently in the communiques, runs north to south and is a tributary of the great River Loire. It joins the stream at the busy town of Angers. The Allied advance continued to thrust eastwards towards a number of populous and historic towns lying on the several routes to Paris. Le Mans, on the winding River Sarthe, was reached by Allied units. All these places occupy dominating positions on rivers, and their skylines are rendered striking by massive churches and castle towers.

AN AERIAL VIEW OF THE TOWN OF CAUMONT, WHICH STANDS AT THE JUNCTION OF MANY ROADS—hence its great strategic value to both Germans and Allies. The town has suffered much during weeks of savage fighting: it served as a jumping-off ground for our recently achieved great advance to the south of Caen



THE EASTWARD THRUST OF THE AMERICAN ARMY ACROSS THE MAYENNE RIVER TOWARDS CHARTRES AND PARIS. This area all lies to the north of the River Loire: with the capture of Le Mans, the spearhead of the attack was directed due east, in an area where the enemy has been greatly weakened owing to the destruction of the bridges on his lines of supply across the Loire. Many historic towns lie within this region (See notes above)—*Drawing by Percy Horne*

THE TANKS MOVE UP

A Special *Sphere* Drawing, and Official Photographs, of the Moment when the Whole British Line went Forward

The drawing reproduced on the right depicts a scene which has become familiar both in Italy and Normandy. When a big advance is getting under way, the infantry accompany the tanks into action in the manner shown, riding on the upper deck and swarming over the big fighting vehicles wherever they can secure a hand-hold. By this means they can reach their proper rendezvous at the proper moment: the men ignore whatever isolated pockets of enemy resistance they may encounter, over-riding them in order to reach the indicated point in time. Should the tanks be trapped, the infantry are ready at hand to engage the enemy or remove any obstacles which may have been erected by the retreating enemy. The old method was to wipe out strong-points as the men went ahead—a long and wearisome business which delayed, and often frustrated, the advance. The task of "mopping up" can better be done by other detachments coming up behind: These, too, are borne into action on tanks, whose support can be called on for the cracking of any tough spot.

Both the American and British Armies have adopted this method, and for this reason have achieved some spectacular advances in Normandy. When the moment came for the advance south of Caumont, rows and lanes were alike crowded with Allied armour and swarming infantry. Whilst the spearhead was going forward, other troops were "following up" and dropping off along the way to root out the nests of Germans left behind. Though retiring swiftly, the enemy was still able to sow his minefields in the path of the oncoming tanks. But these are no longer the menace they once were, owing to the introduction of the Allied "flail" tanks.

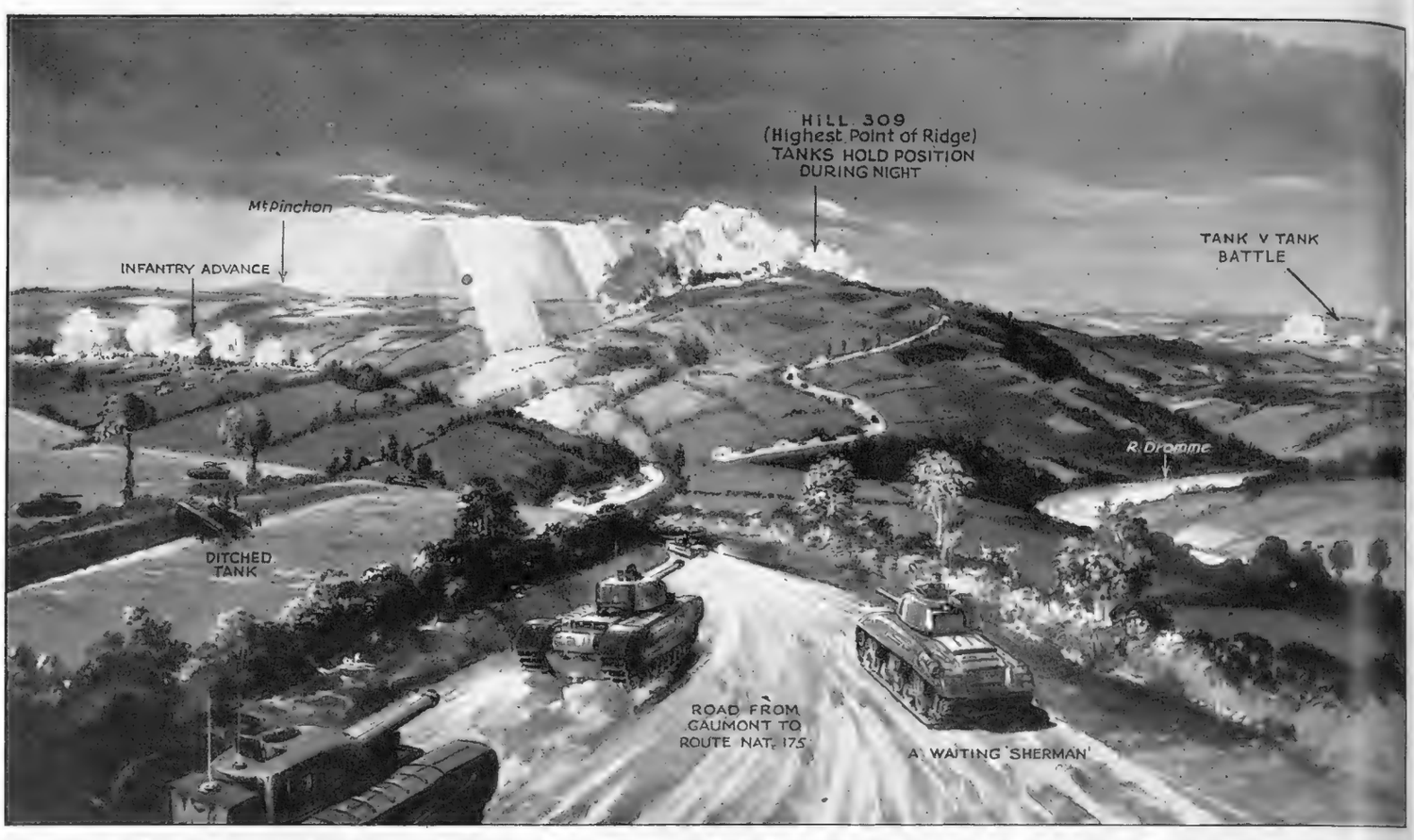
WITH THE BRITISH TANK FORCES TO THE SOUTH OF CAUMONT. Sherman tanks passing through lanes cleared of mines and indicated by white tapes to show the safe areas. It will be noticed that the type of country is now totally different from that in which our troops have hitherto been fighting around Caen

AFTER THE LANES HAVE BEEN CLEARED OF MINES, THE TAPES ARE PUT IN POSITION, and through these armour, infantry and all other traffic must pass. Driving forward over open country, the mechanised columns still manage to send up clouds of dust as they make for the battle area ahead. Note the different types of vehicles included in this picture

THE RAPID ADVANCE TO THE SOUTH. **BRITISH INFANTRY CROWD ON TO THE BIG FIGHTING VEHICLES** to push down the roads and lanes of Normandy without waiting to wipe out every spot of German resistance. The men ride on the tanks to facilitate rapid movement and to maintain their time schedule. This was a characteristic of both the British and American advances—*Drawing by Edward Osmond*

A PHOTOGRAPH WHICH ACTUALLY SHOWS THE INFANTRY RIDING INTO ACTION. It was taken as British Churchill tanks were making their way across country near St. Pierre Torentaine

TO BACK UP THE PRESENT ADVANCE, mile-long convoys of transport move forward with ammunition and supplies. This convoy is passing through the recently captured town of Jurques



HOW THE BRITISH TANKS WON A VITAL HILL BATTLE, AND LED THE WAY TO THE CAPTURE OF THE GREAT MOUNT PINCHON. The Churchills climbed up to the summit of Hill 309, which (contrary to all tank rules) they held throughout the night until sufficient infantry could be rushed up to take over the position—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

BATTLE PICTURES from FRANCE

Scenes from the Fighting in Normandy Depicted in Special *Sphere* Drawings

When the great attack in Normandy opened, one of our immediate objectives was the height known as Hill 309, which forms one of the northern peaks of the Pinchon feature (later captured), and which dominates the surrounding country. At first the going was fairly easy, but in view of the impediment caused by the hedges and ditches intersecting the area, progress tended to slow down later. "Thereupon," writes Mr. Christopher Buckley, "the local commander came to a prompt decision. Instead of letting the tanks stumble on from field to field, with the constant risk of getting themselves completely stuck in one or other of the ditches, he switched them rapidly over on to the high road which runs southward from Caumont to St. Martin."

This manœuvre would scarcely have been possible had the enemy infantry been lining the fringes of the road in any strength. As it was, however, the tanks were able to drive straight through and work their way towards the crest of Hill 309. "In the ordinary way," says Mr. Buckley, "you do not send tanks to attack hills. That is not one of their normal jobs. But for operations in hilly country we possess a tank which has no equal, and that is the Churchill. The tanks went straight at Hill 309 and by mid-afternoon had established themselves securely on its crest—a very important gain. In the ordinary way, it would have been customary to withdraw them at nightfall, to harbour some distance back. Tanks can capture ground, but they cannot hold it without infantry. Rather than sacrifice this key position, the local commander determined to hold on. The tanks laagered on and around the summit. Meanwhile, the infantry were rushed forward through the moonlight hours, riding in trucks or on the supporting tanks which continued to push up the road during the night. When dawn broke we were firmly in control of the hill

THE SCENE DURING THE GREAT BRITISH ADVANCE IN THE CAUMONT SECTOR: A picture taken on August 4 showing the massed armour which broke through the German defensive line. The line of tanks on the left are going up to the front to relieve units which had already been in action, whilst a second line of tanks (on the right) make their way back to re-ammunition and to rest

GERMAN INFANTRY ATTACK BY NIGHT: A SCENE IN THE CLOSELY-WOODED NORMANDY COUNTRY, where the enemy crept up in the moonlight to carry out a silent counter-attack on a Canadian position. They were met with grenades and machine-gun fire and beaten off—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

The German method of attack illustrated in this drawing has been pursued on a number of occasions in the thick countryside of Normandy. The enemy begin the attack just after midnight: on this occasion, however, the moon provided some illumination and enabled the Canadian defenders to see the advancing Germans before they were right on top of them. It was a "silent attack" in every sense, with absolutely no artillery preparation or air bombardment as a preliminary. The Germans simply came creeping across the fields with bayonets fixed. When they were only a few yards distant both sides opened up with machine-guns and grenades. Sharp fighting ensued and the Germans were forced to retire, having once again failed to take the position—Verriers and "Deadeye Dick's Ridge" just to the north of it—for the second time

A NIGHT SCENE SOUTH OF MARIGNY AS THE ATTACK MOVED SOUTHWARDS, after the German retreat from the Periers Road. The enemy gave himself time to set fire to barns and to kill the cattle, as well as to fire the village of Marigny itself—despite the speed of the American pursuit in this area—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

The drawing above depicts a scene in the American sector around Coutances just as our Allies were accelerating the pace of the German retreat southwards. The Americans passed through Marigny, which was ruined and burning and where there was no house intact. South of the town, along the road to Coutances, the way was pitted with great bomb-craters, though the road itself was intact. Enemy horse-drawn transport had been caught on the move by our fighter-bombers here. Overturned vehicles, dead horses and Germans lay in confusion, the wreckage half-buried in deep, brown dust. Every quarter-mile or so there was the wreck of a Panther tank. Where the gaps in the hedges gave brief glimpses of bomb-blasted fields more wreckage of German vehicles and guns could be seen. In every bank, behind every tree, there were enemy foxholes. This had been the "thick crust" of the German defence, but the bombers had blasted the Germans out. American armour and artillery had smashed more, and the infantry had broken clean through

DRIVING out the JAPS in the PACIFIC

The American Operations in the Marianas and at Guam

—The Latest Pictures from the U.S.

The relentless American pressure on the Japs in the Central Pacific still continues. We have already published in these pages a number of pictures taken during the assault on Saipan Island: others, recently arrived from the United States, are given here, together with pictures from Guam and Pagan Islands, the two newest targets of the U.S. Fifth Fleet and its carrier-borne aircraft.

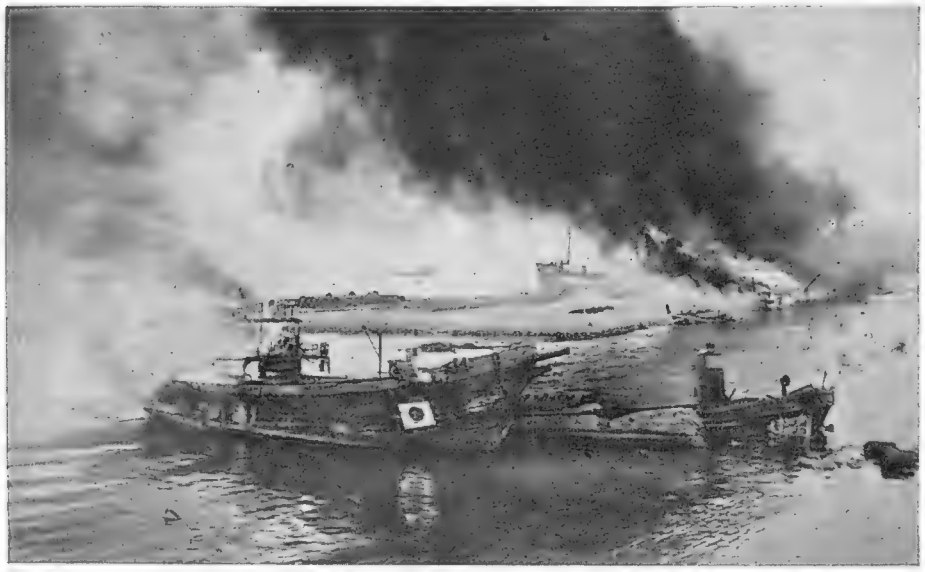
The landing on Saipan was made on June 15. By July 9 the capture of this important island was complete, with severe losses in men and material amongst the enemy. On July 20 the next target was laid under attack. This was the island of Guam, captured by the Japs from the Americans two days after the treacherous attack on Pearl Harbour; it is a considerable spot, largest and most southerly of all the Marianas, with a peacetime population of 15,000. Like Saipan, it would be easy to convert Guam into a "Bomb Tokyo" base, for it lies well within the range of the new American Super-Fortresses.

Pagan Island is the northernmost of the Marianas. At the moment of writing, there is no news of a direct invasion of this place, but it has been attacked from the air by carrier-borne aircraft of the Fifth U.S. Fleet.

The ring around Japan is tightening daily. Already the Japs have changed their Prime Minister and Government, and it is obvious that at home the threat to the mainland itself is keenly felt. With each new landing, the Americans are accentuating the feeling that the war is drawing closer to Tokyo and to the sacred person of the Emperor himself

AFTER THE AMERICAN INVASION OF SAIPAN, IN THE MARIANA ISLANDS. The sky is pock-marked with flak from U.S. anti-aircraft guns, as Jap raiding aircraft are driven off from an American convoy taking supplies and reinforcements to the captured island. The convoy was manned by U.S. Coastguards, and included transports and ships of a Task Force operating along the coast of Saipan. The landings on the island were made on June 15, and on July 9 Admiral Nimitz announced that the U.S. forces were in full occupation with all organised Japanese resistance at an end

THE AMERICAN COMMANDERS-IN-CHIEF VISIT SAIPAN. On the left is Admiral Raymond A. Spruance, Commander of the U.S. Fifth Fleet which defeated the Japs in the great Philippine sea action, whereby the enemy's naval forces were crippled. He is reporting to Admiral Ernest J. King (in centre), C.-in-C. of the U.S. Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations, and to Admiral Chester W. Nimitz (on right), C.-in-C. of the Pacific Fleet and the Pacific Ocean area. Just behind Admiral Nimitz is Major-General Sanderford Jarman, Saipan Island Commander. This picture was taken on the Isely airfield on Saipan



JAPANESE VESSELS BURN AT THEIR ANCHORAGES in the Boat Basin just north of Garapan, capital of Saipan. They had been bombarded by Marine artillery landed on the island, to prevent a Japanese evacuation by sea. According to the enemy, two American divisions were landed to effect the capture of Saipan

A ROW OF JAP ZERO FIGHTER PLANES AS THEY WERE ABANDONED BY THE ENEMY and found by the American forces who took over the strategic Aslito airstrip on Saipan Island. Most of the aircraft were jacked up on scaffolding, apparently undergoing repair: many of them, however, appeared to be intact, showing that the Japs left in too great a hurry to do any effective demolition work. In the Marianas operations the enemy's losses in aircraft were exceptionally heavy, 747 planes being destroyed at a cost of 151 American aircraft

THE ATTACK ON GUAM, LARGEST AND SOUTHERNMOST OF THE MARIANA ISLANDS, which was launched by the Americans on July 20, after their successful occupation of Saipan. Clearly discernible through the clouds is a sizeable Japanese airfield, which was one of the first objectives towards which the U.S. troops pressed following the Marine and Army assault on the Jap-held, former American island

No sooner had the Americans secured the island of Saipan than they launched their next attack, against Guam (which was formerly owned by the United States). This island lies 130 miles to the south of Saipan and is the largest of the Mariana group: it is some 1,500 miles from Tokio and the Philippines. Formerly a U.S. naval base, it was captured by the Japs two days after Pearl Harbour. Together with Saipan, its return to American hands would effectively cut Japan's sea lanes with her southern conquests and would bring all Japan within easy range of the American Super-Fortresses. Moderate opposition was encountered when the Americans landed on July 20 under powerful naval and air support: Marines and infantry went ashore first, and were backed up by Admiral Spruance's Fifth American Fleet, which included aircraft carriers and warships

EVIDENCE OF FIERCE FIGHTING ON SAIPAN. A burnt-out American Alligator tank on the beach, surrounded by men of an American division which took part in the initial assault on the island. It was three weeks before the occupation was fully achieved

PAGAN ISLAND, NORTHERNMOST OF THE MARIANA ISLAND GROUP, UNDER ATTACK. On June 24 carrier-borne aircraft of the American Navy found a new target in the northernmost island of the Marianas. During their assault on Pagan, they destroyed ten Jap planes and sank four small cargo-ships, damaging two others. This picture shows the vessels burning (in the top centre of the picture). The enemy-held airfield towards the right has already been pitted with bombs dropped by the American aircraft

THE "GRIPER" GOES OUT TO THE RESCUE : A BRITISH TANK LANDING CRAFT, DRIFTING HELPLESSLY IN A NORTH-EASTERLY GALE IN THE CHANNEL AND WITH HER RAMP DOWN, IS TAKEN IN TOW BY ONE OF THE SPECIAL RESCUE TUGS OF THE ROYAL NAVY. In six days after the Invasion, the "Griper" towed a total of 75,000 tons of shipping and invasion material *(See note at right)*—*Drawing by Montague Dawson*

***On left*—HOW WATCH HAS BEEN KEPT ON THE "TIRPITZ." A picture of the battleship at her mooring in the Kaafiord, taken in July 1944.** Reports from Stockholm have recently stated that the much-battered *Tirpitz* has been seen exercising inside the Altenfiord for restricted periods. Apparently, she has been patched-up and made seaworthy after the damage sustained in the attack by British midget submarines in September last and by torpedo aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm in April 1944. She is reported to be able to travel only at considerably reduced speed. That the enemy battleship, pride of the German Navy, is under constant surveillance is revealed by this official photograph taken by an R.A.F. aircraft of the Photographic Reconnaissance Unit (under the direction of Coastal Command) only last month above the Kaafiord. Numerous small vessels and craft surround the ship. Some damage has evidently been repaired so far as the visible parts of the ship are concerned, but the starboard boat and aircraft crane are missing. Replacements of these are probably necessary. The Stockholm report states that German gangs have been working during every hour of daylight to complete the task of repair and to make the vessel seaworthy enough for the long trip down the Norwegian coast to a German port

A MID-CHANNEL RESCUE SCENE

And Other Pictures of the Royal Navy at Work off Normandy and Norway

The naval rescue tug *Griper* is one of several similar vessels which are taking part in invasion operations in the Channel and off the coast of Normandy. They tackle all jobs that come their way, and whenever they encounter ships in difficulty they go to their assistance. On one occasion when returning to England, *Griper* saw a Tank Landing Craft in difficulties drifting helplessly in a north-easterly gale towards Cherbourg, which was not then in Allied hands. It would not have been long before the craft came within range of enemy batteries. The ship's ramp was down and her engines were out of action.

Griper overtook her: in the heavy sea the job of fixing a line called for some fine seamanship from both crews. Eventually the L.C.T. was heading in a more friendly direction—although it was still an anxious journey for part of the way, as this was not a swept area and there was the possibility of running into a mine-field.

The rescue tug was operating between a South Coast port and the Normandy beach-head for six days starting from D-Day. She was frequently under fire from enemy shore batteries and spasmodic night bombing

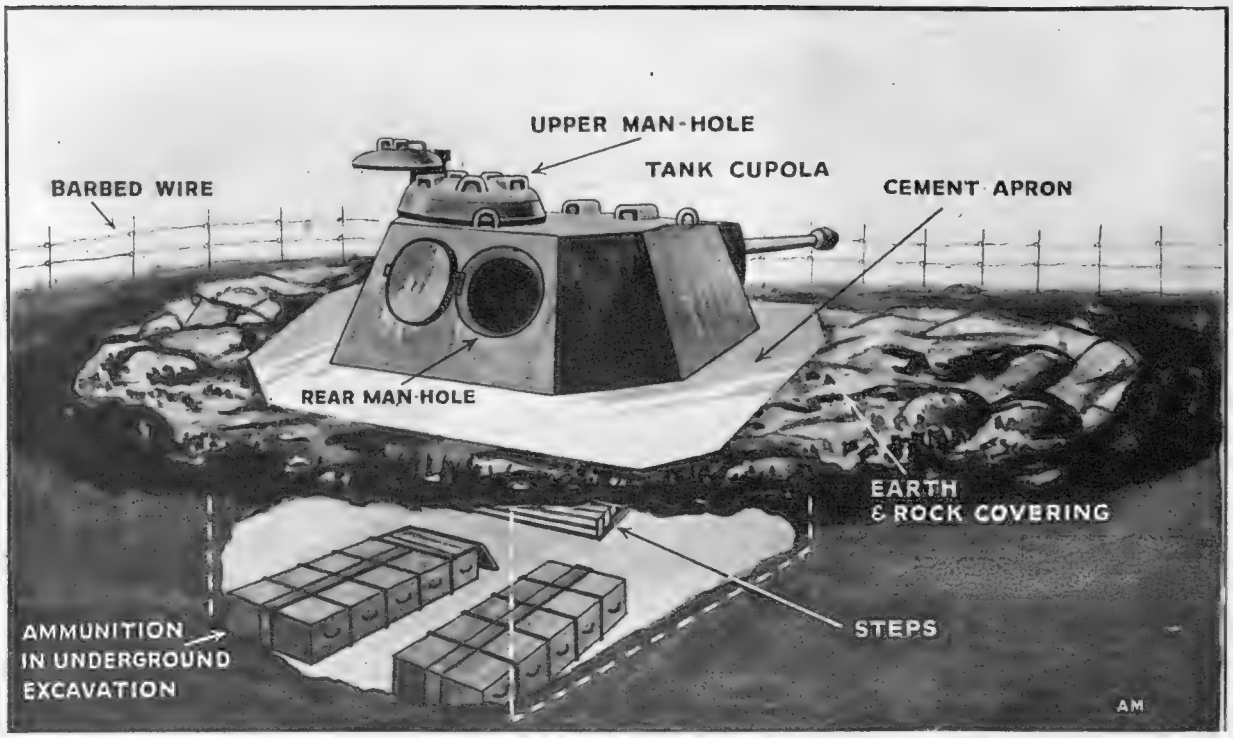
ADRIFT FOUR NIGHTS IN THE CHANNEL: An officer and six ratings, whose Vehicle Landing Barge was separated from its convoy six miles off the Normandy beaches, were adrift for four nights. They were without food for 59 hours, and without a hot drink for 63 hours. They were saved from a German E-boat by the timely intervention of a British frigate and finally boarded a drifting oiler, in which they returned to a British port. Three days later their own craft was seaworthy again, and they made the crossing to Normandy in 15 hours. Above are seen Stoker Weaver, Sub-Lieut. W. N. Atty and Chief Petty Officer Smith after their rescue

***Below*—THE FRIGATE "ROWLEY" (OF THE SPEY CLASS) shoots down two enemy planes in her first engagement**
—Drawing by Wm. McDowell

This was achieved recently in half an hour, when the victims—a Dornier 217 and a Ju. 88—were brought down in flames when they made a night attack on a convoy in the English Channel. After the first few rounds from the 3-inch pom-pom and Œrlikon guns, a red glow developed in the rear of the Dornier. The aeroplane began to lose height and it hit the sea in a burst of flame. Soon the Ju. 88 approached low. The forward Œrlikon was the first gun to get a bearing and its tracers showed immediate hits. Then all guns got on the mark: the Ju. 88 hit the sea like a ball of fire. The frigate's guns'-crews are all "hostilities only" ratings, some of them serving in their first ship

BATTLE EQUIPMENT —ALLIED and ENEMY

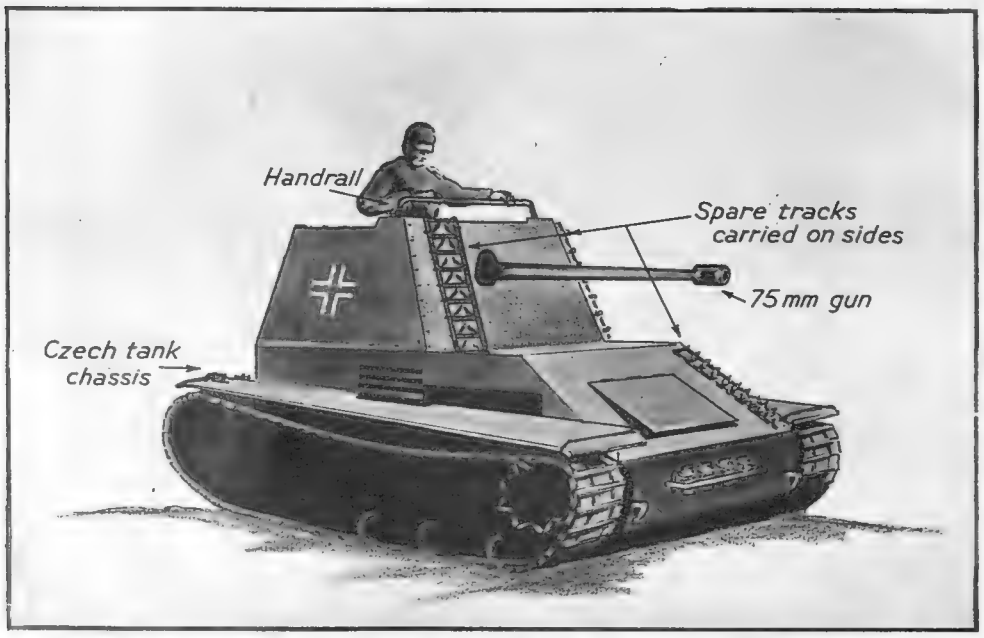
New Drawings and Photographs of Tanks and Vehicles on the Battlefield



HOW THE GERMANS MAKE STRONGPOINTS OUT OF THEIR WRECKED TANKS: The turret is removed and dug in almost flush with the ground, and used to hold up the advance of Allied armour and infantry. This diagram illustrates the complete "strongpoint" which results, with underground cavern for ammunition and crew, cement apron around the gun, and barbed-wire defences—*Drawing by A. Morris*

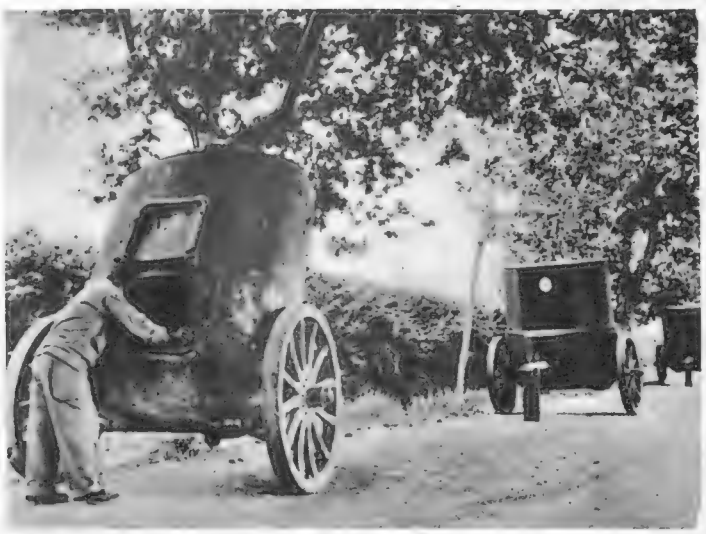
The method of "digging-in" Panthers and Tigers originated in the Western Desert, where these powerful engines of war were put into shallow depressions in the hull-down position; so that they could hold up an advance and yet present a most difficult target to our gunners. In Italy, the method was improved upon by the Germans, who utilised the turrets from knocked-out tanks to erect miniature strongpoints around Cassino and elsewhere. Now, in Normandy, the tank-turret "fortress" has been perfected in such fashion that even our fine 17-pounder guns have found it extremely difficult to dislodge the enemy. The whole turret is usually placed on a cement apron: beneath it is an underground excavation to house ammunition and crew, and around the whole are barbed-wire defences. Even the rocket-firing Typhoons, which dive right on to these strongpoints, find them exceedingly difficult to hit. There is usually an escape route for the German crew through the manhole in the rear.

AN ACTUAL PHOTOGRAPH OF A DUG-IN TANK TURRET which formed part of the Hitler Line in Italy: This 75-mm. gun commanded the ground below the town of Pontecorvo in the Hitler Line, a formidable obstacle in the path of the Eighth Army during their progress towards Rome. The enemy positions were carefully chosen: turrets of the Mark V.-type tank, embedded in concrete emplacements, formed the main defences. These turrets mounted long-barrelled, special 75-mm. guns and were sunk low in the ground: the flat areas in front of them were sewn liberally with all sorts of mines. The Allied tanks not knocked out by the well-placed German guns had thus to run through dangerous areas to reach the actual strong-points



A GERMAN SELF-PROPELLED GUN mounted on a flimsy and ancient Czech chassis—*Drawing by B. C. Wood*

The variety of self-propelled guns becomes even more diverse. This German 75-mm. (the same calibre as the American "assault gun" with the stubby barrel, illustrated in last week's issue) has a long and tapering barrel. Moreover, it is mounted on a very flimsy and ancient Czech tank chassis. The flimsiness is demonstrated by the amount of spare tracking with which the vehicles are invariably festooned. On this version of the self-propelled gun there is a characteristic hand-rail on the top of the turret, so that the commander can steady himself while prospecting the ground ahead. Numbers of these vehicles were destroyed in dive-bombing attacks by Allied aircraft in Italy

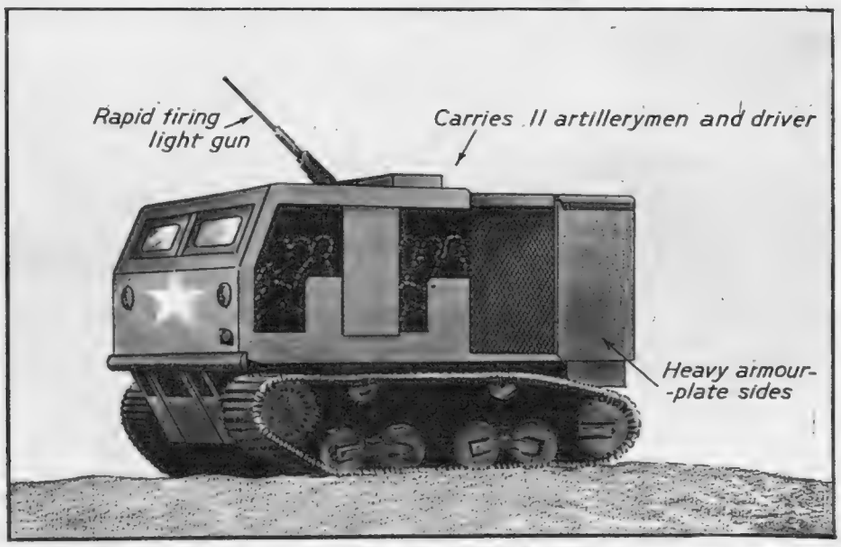


PORTABLE PILL-BOXES USED BY THE NAZIS: These ingenious constructions were found in Italy, in the Vada area, by the Fifth Army. They were intended to shelter German machine-gunners charged with the task of holding up the Allied advance. Note the solid tyres on which the pill-boxes were carried

DISCOVERED DURING THE BRITISH OFFENSIVE SOUTH OF CAUMONT—a dummy German tank built of wood: This quaint object was one of a number found around St. Martin des Besaces just after the opening of the present heavy Allied offensive. It was rudely fashioned out of wood, and was obviously intended to "scare" our advancing infantry and to delay them. It probably argues that the enemy were short of the real thing in this sector!

ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL WEAPONS OF THE GERMAN PANZER DIVISIONS—The Panther tank and its principal characteristics. It is this type which has gradually ousted the Tiger from the position of chief German armoured fighting vehicle. The Panther carries a very long-barrelled 75-mm. gun and it is heavily armoured with a sloping front (see *notes at right*)
—*Drawing by B. C. Wood*

On left—In his recent War Review, Mr. Churchill had quite a lot to say about tanks—our own and the enemy's. Of the Panther, he said that it was "unreliable mechanically," and that it was very vulnerable from the flanks. "Our 17-pounder will go right through them: provided our tactics are good we can defeat them without difficulty," he added. The Panther weighs 45 tons: this compares with the German Tiger's 60 tons. Its armour is 1¾ ins. thick on the sides, but on the gun mantlet there is 4 ins. of plating: the sloping front of the tank adds to the defensive strength of the Panther. The 75-mm. gun has an 18-ft. barrel—longer than that of the Allied Sherman tank: it is mounted in the turret and can be turned the full 360 degrees. It appears that the Germans are using a thick plastic substance with which to coat the armour in a pattern of regular ridges: such might be a concrete mixture designed at once to strengthen the protection and to render the tank less liable to be fired by an incendiary shell or an explosion of the petrol or ammunition. The crew of five consists of the commander, driver, radio operator, loader and gunlayer



A TANK-LIKE HAULING UNIT IN USE WITH THE AMERICAN ARMY: it carries a dozen men inside, has an anti-aircraft gun mounted on the roof for defence, and has armour-plated sides. The British Army has a number of similar vehicles used for similar purposes, and known as "Quads"—*Drawing by B. C. Wood*

A GERMAN HALF-TRACK VEHICLE resembling the American hauling unit shown on the left. It was captured in Normandy—at Le Bourg, near Caumont—and is obviously capable of conveying heavy loads of men or equipment—or both

The type of tractor depicted above is semi-armoured, and it is equipped against aerial attack with a rapid-firing A.-A. gun. This vehicle is usually employed as a big-gun hauler: it carries ammunition in sufficient quantity for it to go into immediate action; should the occasion arise, independently of supplies from the rear. There is accommodation for a gun crew of eleven men, in addition to the driver—making a total complement of twelve. The crew sit in front, protected by the armour-plating on the sides. The ammunition is carried at the back in a special caisson

THE R.A.F. LEVEL A LANDING-STRIP IN NORMANDY: A makeshift but effective method of keeping a Spitfire airstrip level is shown in this picture. The roller was borrowed from a French farmer and weighted with two 500-lb. bombs. It is attached to a jeep driven by pilots of an Australian squadron, who are lending a hand with the levelling. One of them sits behind on the roller to steady the bombs as they jog over the uneven surface

A NEW USE FOR DISCARDED PARACHUTES IN NORMANDY. They serve as tents for American units behind the lines: Thousands of parachutes littered the Normandy countryside after D-Day: many of them were salvaged in due course, but many others were immediately used for a variety of purposes by the Allied troops who came later. Here is one such use: rigged up with poles inside and stretched out with tent pegs, they make fine waterproof tents for American units working behind the lines. Made of the very best materials, these discarded parachutes are both waterproof and windproof

AWAY FROM IT ALL . . .

A Londoner's Holiday-time Impression of Life Away from the War and from the Flying Bomb.

By CHARLES GRAVES

BY the time this appears in print I shall be back in London, and Welsh Wales will seem as remote as Marylebone has become here. I am writing this, really, for Londoners who are still in the thick of it and may wonder what people in safe areas think about it all.

Well, we came on a crowded train, standing in the corridor for much of the way, and I felt somewhat incensed at the railway porters at various stations grinning at our discomfort. "One flying bomb," I thought, "would take those silly smiles off your faces."

On arrival here one might have expected a number of inquiries as to London's ordeal. But not a bit of it. Perhaps the natives have heard enough from the many visitors who have come up here from London in the first six weeks of the flying bombs. The fact remains that nobody asks about or speaks of them. Whether it is tact, boredom or sheer lack of interest I don't know. It is certainly a relief from the intermittent "Where did that one go?" queries which have been the daily and nightly lot of the Southern Englanders.

The first evening I was here I left the bath-water in the bath just as I do in London—just in case. For a moment I wondered why the flying bombs were late on parade. Then I remembered, and felt both uncomfortable that I was not in London and glad to be sure of a quiet night. On top of that, there was the very understanding sympathy for everyone in Southern England that night. It was rather like the first two or three evenings of my return after having been in a corvette in E-boat Alley and a destroyer in the Channel convoy. Dusk was, and probably still is, the start of the tricky time in E-boat Alley. After a week or two the vivid memories grew blurred. I suppose that if I stayed here more than my allotted eight days I would get lethargic and forgetful of London too. As it is, there are occasional training planes which in the distance sound just like flying bombs; and the same effect is created by some ancient two-stroke vehicles on the roads.

There is no doubt that one's sense of hearing has been sharpened considerably by listening for the flying bombs to cut out in London. Distant country noises are more audible than before, and I have always been blessed with very acute hearing.

To revert to the local reactions, the natives' attitude to London's trials is much the same as Londoners' used to be towards those of Dover, except for the fact that these people have not seen a shot fired in anger since the outbreak of war, and the nearest bomb dropped was a small stray in 1940-41.

As for visitors like myself, we wonder how our own houses are getting on and try to read between the lines of the guarded announcements of unspecified hospitals, hotels and residential areas having received direct hits the night before. This is all the more anxious because the war seems to be going along so wonderfully well in Europe.

As I write I can see the whole Snowdon range, the blue sea of Cardigan Bay shimmering, the green of the woods immediately below the terrace of the house, the yellow of the evening primroses, the purple foxgloves, the ripening pears and apples, the pink of the roses and the white flowers of the late-blooming blackberry bushes. There is not a sound except for a small stream, a cock crowing, and the buzz of a bee—which has just cut out. Now a wood-pigeon is cooing and a cow lowing.

This morning I played golf. The links are in superb condition. It was real peacetime stuff, caddies and all. To-morrow I shall bathe. The barbed wire has disappeared, though there are still a few poles in the sand, in silent reminder of the invasion summer of 1940.

Perhaps the most remarkable and delightful change from London are the country smells. Instead of the sub-acute stale odours of the capital from garbage lorries and dust-bins, there are the perfume of new-mown hay, the perfumed sea-breeze, the perfume of the flowers and the woods. There is none of that black-dust smell which permeates everything within three streets of an exploded flying bomb. We have grown so accustomed to the odours that surround uninhabitable houses and emerge from the garbage-bins which stand permanently on many streets that we only realise how disgusting are these smells when we breathe the good fresh country air again. By contrast, the recent return to good manners and civility shown in the shops of London to customers who are still sticking it out is sadly absent in these bomb-free areas where the casual take-it-or-leave-it behaviour of the tradesmen is more than somewhat irritating.

If you walk through the crowded little main street of this village, you have to use Sherlock Holmes methods to decide which are bombed-out evacuees and which are munition workers and others on holiday. On the whole, it is probable that the ones in printed dresses with neatly-done hair and a holiday air are the evacuees, while those in shorts and bathing-suit tops, with very lank hair, must be the holiday-makers. The latter seem to spend most of their time on tandem bicycles, many of the youths being literally stripped to the waist. What the chapel fathers think of them I cannot imagine.

Beer is in very short supply. Whisky and gin are more or less unprocurable. Port and sherry have not been seen for eighteen months. But the sunsets are superb. The Welsh lamb is tender. The hillsides are covered with bilberries. The mountains remain remote, unmoved by war. Birds, not sirens, wake one pleasantly in the morning. An Alert is unimaginable. Deep peace broods over the whole beautiful countryside. A distant curlew, the thin trickle of blue smoke from a cottage chimney, a dog barking, green bracken, sheep lying in shady corners—yes, it is a pleasant escape from wartime London, and it comes almost as a shock to walk past a farmhouse and hear the cultured voice of Frederick Grisewood or Alvar Liddell emerging from a kitchen where only Welsh is spoken unless there are Sassenach around.

Of course, the locals have relatives in the Forces, and I sometimes wonder what Dai Jones, the cowhand, makes of Italy, though John Roberts, the shepherd-boy, will find himself very much at home in Brittany, even to the extent of being able, unexpectedly enough, to converse with the Breton peasants in their own language. He will recognise the similarity, too, between the tall hats and gala best of the old ladies of Brittany and the pictures of his own grandmother in her Sunday finery. Yes, indeed!

But I am straying from the path. The lovely, cold, pure water here is a totally different liquid from the hard, swimming-pool-like chlorinated stuff which passes as drinking water in London. Farm butter is farm butter. Fresh eggs were laid this morning, not five days ago maybe. For five long days now I have not heard a siren, neither by day nor by night. It is quite extraordinary, though the feeling of mild surprise is now wearing off. I know that if I go off to play golf and my wife is at home, I need not worry about a flying bomb passing over me and hitting her. There are no ominous black mushrooms of smoke towering high in the air. No one goes along the road with a bundle of clothing and blankets for a night in the shelters. No imminent-danger signal is hauled to the top of the castle. There are no hoots of alarms-within-the-Alert. And yet, and yet I am beginning to feel a trifle restless. I sympathise with the man on leave from Sierra Leone who asked me to-day how to get him an unpaid job in London to replace someone in need of a holiday until he himself has to return to his overseas job next month. It is hard to analyse the feeling. The warnings of the Prime Minister about the rockets are grim. It is common knowledge that the flying bombs are likely to continue indefinitely until the collapse of Germany.

I am very fond of my house, but not so fond that I would not prefer to survive it, rather than to be bombed in it. Perhaps it is that, having lived all my life, off and on, in London, I have acquired the Cockney's morbid affection for knowing the worst at first hand. The capital is too large for Londoners to feel a personal brotherhood with one another as the Men of Harlech might do. Besides, there are not so many who have kept their houses open all through the war—if only because so many have been bombed-out and others have had to follow their employers when the latter dispersed their offices and factories to the country. So it is not the *Cives Romanus sum* mentality which would lure me back. Possibly the realisation that London is more than ever the centre of the world in this climax of world history has something to do with it. Imagine anything more galling than to be out of London when the armistice occurs if you could have been there.

Optimistic as I am, I cannot expect Germany to collapse by the time these words appear in print, in spite of the German Court of Military Honour—a phrase I was discussing at some length in THE SPHERE several days before it was suddenly resuscitated by the German High Command. No, I cannot really explain this queer desire to return to London when the time comes, for I have not the slightest wish to go back until the eight days are up. . . .

I have just asked my wife if she can give the reason. "You know perfectly well, Charles," she smiled, "you cannot bear to miss anything." Well, maybe she's right; and I would certainly like a glass of sherry again, not to mention a game of chess.

"ESCAPISM," AND THE HARVEST CAMP: "Business with Pleasure" is the motto in this camp at Tring. The authorities look after the social life as well as the agricultural side: the campers, who are mostly munition, aircraft and clerical workers, thoroughly enjoy their stay in consequence. They get paid for it, too!

"ESCAPISM," AND FASHION, AT ASCOT. Many smartly-dressed racegoers were seen at the Ascot Holiday Meeting over the August Bank Holiday. Even after three years of rationing in clothes (perhaps because of it!), many of the women who attended turned out in hats similar to those shown above

"ESCAPISM" IN NORMANDY: Comfort comes first, even when clearing up a French village. This British soldier evidently thought a woman's hat more comfortable than a steel helmet

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this publication should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export

PICTURES FROM THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE

WARTIME WATCH OVER THE VALUABLE TIMBER IN THE NEW FOREST: The 55-ft. tower designed and built by the Forest staff, to guard against fires

The New Forest is one of the few Royal forests which have survived substantially intact from Norman times. It is now under the charge of the Forestry Commission: the importance of maintaining the rural character of the district is a matter on which the Commissioners have always laid much stress. The New Forest was originally "afforested" by William the Conqueror: it is therefore no longer "new." Fellings of some of the mighty oaks and pines have been heavier during the present war than during the years 1914-18. But, because of the improved technique of the Forestry Commissioners, the effects on amenity are as yet scarcely discernible. Such unavoidable scars as may occur will be healed within a short time after the war

ONE OF THE FORESTERS INSPECTS A TANK used for supplying water to fight fires in the Forest

A ROW OF CORSICAN PINES IN THE NEW FOREST: These trees are seventy years old, and some are over 100 ft. in height

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF PART OF THE FOREST as seen from the fire-watcher's tower. The trees in this view are twenty-two years old. They are carefully watched, and reafforestation continually takes place to make up for war wastage

BATTLE SCARS IN DEVON. The hotel and church at Stokenham after they had been "freed" by the Americans, who rehearsed the capture of Cherbourg within this area in the heart of rural England

AT SLAPTON SANDS, IN SOUTH DEVON: These are the wrecked homes of English country folk who gave up their villages to provide a realistic training-ground for the American troops now fighting in Normandy. Three thousand people of Devon last winter gave up a dozen picturesque villages and many farmsteads so that the U.S. Army could fight realistic battles over the sites of their homes. For an area of 25 square miles the countryside is scarred and torn, the villages deserted and the houses, churches and hotels wrecked. Now this battered region has been "freed" and the former inhabitants are being allowed to return. But many of the farmers say that it will take years to get the land back to its former sweetness, and many of the villagers may never return, having found new dwellings and new occupations elsewhere. There are 750 families to reinstate if the district is to be repopulated again, and 180 farms to get going with new machinery and fresh stock. The work of restoring the area has already begun. Most of the village churches are intact, but many of the houses and other buildings are partially ruined

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

THREE IMPORTANT NEW BOOKS

Somerset Maugham's American Novel; Sir Ian Hamilton's Memoirs, Vol. II.; A Character Study of the Past

MR. SOMERSET MAUGHAM has written an American novel. And that, when you come to examine it, is a curious and an impressive fact, and a feat not equalled by any of the other English authors at present living in the United States. For Mr. Maugham's novel is not only written about Americans and partly for Americans, it is also faintly scented with American idiom. Don't, by the same token, imagine that there is the slightest breath of slang or Hollywood double-talk about that. There isn't. On the occasions—I think there are two of them—when slang is used, it is to create a deliberate effect, like a sudden and calculated sound in a tense stage situation.

The writer has done something infinitely more subtle by giving his whole book a dominantly American, rather than an English or a European, savour, and this in spite of the fact that most of the action takes place in Paris, or in the south of France. If one can say that Julian Green wrote French novels and that Henry James wrote English novels, then assuredly one can say that Somerset Maugham has written an American one.

A TENNIS CHAMPION'S DAUGHTER. Mrs. Kay Menzies, better known as Kay Stammers, has a little daughter, Virginia Victoria, who is now ten months old. Mrs. Menzies was playing tennis once again a few days ago—for the Red Cross, at Bournemouth

Which point being settled, at least to my satisfaction, I will tell you something of the story. Primarily, THE RAZOR'S EDGE (Heinemann. 12s. 6d.) is a study of character, and particularly the character of one young American who, coming back to his home in Chicago after some violent emotional and physical experiences as an Army flyer in France in 1918, determines to find his own solution to life's riddles in study and contemplation. His friends, and the pretty, plump, vivacious girl to whom he is engaged, are both worried and aggrieved about him. Their state might justly be called one of alarm and despondency.

For Larry, it appears, doesn't want to work; and work, as the great majority of American citizens are taught, is the only true road to security, happiness and respect. He has a little money of his own, and that, as he explains very gently, is what makes it possible for him to do what he wants, which is, quite simply, to loaf. Larry's leisure, however, turns out to be many people's conception of constant occupation, for, having gone to Paris for an agreed two years, he spends them in near-poverty, reading and studying all day and half the night, and frequenting none of those haunts dedicated to the American-in-Paris.

After these two years, Isabel and her rich, downright, Middle Western mother come to Paris too, where they are shepherded and entertained by Mrs. Bradley's brother, Elliott Templeton, who deserves a book for himself and gets at least half one here. For Elliott is a perfectly-observed phenomenon: the compleat snob. Social distinctions, fine shades of grading, the exact delineation between an American-born French duchess and the real Faubourg St. Germain article—all these problems were Elliott's life, in his early days almost his meat and drink. On him Mr. Maugham exerts his satirical sense while still retaining an exquisitely sympathetic touch. "If I have given the reader the impression that he was a despicable character," he writes, "I have done him an injustice. He was for one thing what the French call *serviable*, a word for which, so far as I know, there is no exact equivalent in English. . . . It caused him pleasure to give. . . . It is true that his guests were chosen for their social importance rather than because they were good company, but he took care to invite at least one or two for their powers of entertainment. . . . He was a good talker if only you could keep him off the subject of dukes and duchesses, (though) I don't believe even Marcel Proust knew more of the inner life of the aristocracy than Elliott Templeton.

For nearly twenty years, from that Paris of the 1920's, Mr. Maugham follows his personages through the rises and mutations of their lives; creating and observing always, and brilliantly communicating his own interest to the reader. It might be said that not one of these people matter, but I have no inclination to that Olympian attitude over this story. For me, they are all people, human beings translated temporarily to fiction, and I can think of no more sincere compliment to pay a novelist.

LISTENING FOR THE DRUMS (Faber and Faber. 18s.) is the second volume of General Sir Ian Hamilton's memoirs, and in case that should give you a misleading impression of something cut-and-dried, officially discreet, written in Governmental English, and, in a word, dull, let me tell you at once that they are as funny, as lively, and as exciting a book of reminiscences as I have read for many months. Sir Ian is, by his own admission, ninety years old at the present moment, but the frontispiece—a photograph of him returning from a levee in the full-dress uniform of the Gordon Highlanders, not so long ago—gives one a pretty accurate idea of the command and the humour that neither eighty-odd years, nor a weight of plaid, chains, medals, orders, a sword, and no fewer than three daggers or dirks can touch, and far less extinguish.

This volume covers the period between 1873, when young Ian was first gazetted to the Suffolk Regiment, to the late '90's, and a characteristically cryptic entry—"I give Winston a cow." During this time Sir Ian saw much service in India, where he went on being transferred to the Gordon Highlanders, fought on the Frontier, hunted tigers, was in South Africa and fought in the fateful battle of Majuba Hill, went back to India as A.D.C. to "Lord Bobs" (then Sir Fred Roberts), married, became a close friend of Rudyard Kipling's, and generally distinguished himself.

I do believe that Sir Ian could write a rousing account of a village vegetable show, but since the material offered by his letters and diaries is seldom short of the hair-raising, he has not had to perform any such miracle. He has, on the other hand, given us a delightful book, as amusing to the eyes of 1944 as it is evocative of the glories of the '70's and '80's.

GLADYS COOPER'S SON IN LONDON. John Buckmaster, who has just arrived here as a private in the U.S. Army, is working in the Public Relations Office of Colonel Ben Lyon. He is twenty-nine years of age and he has been an American citizen for a year. Before being called up, he was an entertainer in New York night clubs. Miss Gladys Cooper is in Hollywood

Miss Norah Hoult never writes a conventional novel, so whether her new one, THERE WERE NO WINDOWS (Heinemann. 8s. 6d.), is considered as a study in character or as an essay in the macabre, it is still an odd and a poignant *tour-de-force*. Her subject is Claire, an old lady of nearly eighty, who was once a fashionable novelist and has now lost her memory and, to a certain extent, her physical control, and is approaching what you and I would possibly call madness.

Claire still lives in the big, inconvenient Kensington house that she has owned for many years, but now she is alone in it with a pretty and bad-tempered Irish cook who tolerates but bullies "the queer one" in her charge. Claire lives, too, on a continually fluctuating borderline between the past and the present. The period is 1941 to 1942, and the London she knew has disappeared, to give way to an uncertain territory of black-outs and blitzes and policemen with a capricious sense of respect towards the distinguished. In her youth Claire had shocked her family by becoming the mistress of a married man who promptly married someone else when his wife died. She had been a novelist, and in due course had fallen in love with a second-rate man of letters, who had then deserted her.

Now she is the ruin of a once-witty and civilised lady; not senile, since that connotes apathy, but living at a perpetual tension. At rare intervals old friends come to see her, but leave bored, exasperated and half-frightened. Crazed with loneliness, and with too much perception not to be aware of her own decline, Claire fights in vain for attention, for whisky, for affection.

A stupid "companion" is foisted upon her, since, in fact, she needs constant supervision, but this Miss Jones is a mean-souled tabby-cat whose complacency combines with the cook's cruelty to drive her out of her mind for good and all. The story closes with Claire's death.

Perhaps she was never a brilliant or important creature even in her heyday, though it may be accepted that her Victorian admirers found her vivacious and entertaining. It is a picture of lonely and defeated old age and thereby, if you will, depressing, but to those who find only mediocrity really saddening, I recommend this book without reserve.

THE ENGLISH "BROWN HOUSE" FOR SALE: Sir Oswald Mosley's former residence on the Thames Embankment, showing minor results of bomb blast. The London house where Sir Oswald Mosley, "Leader" of the British Union of Fascists, lived and planned his political moves is now up for sale. Here Mosley held council with his black-shirted fellow Fascists until Parliament banned uniforms. One of his principal followers in those days was William Joyce, razor-fighter of the London slums, who became "Haw-Haw" of the German radio. The British Union of Fascists has been disbanded: Mosley lives in retirement after his release from prison. The above is the first picture of his house ever made for the Press

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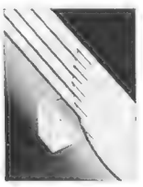
.... not yet,  *but very soon*

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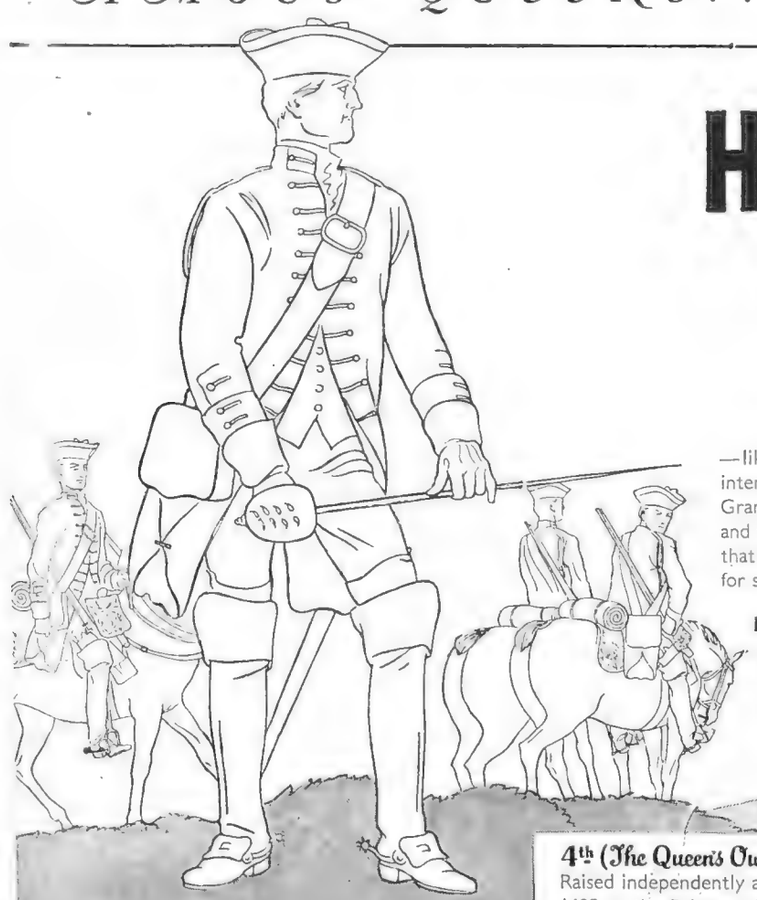

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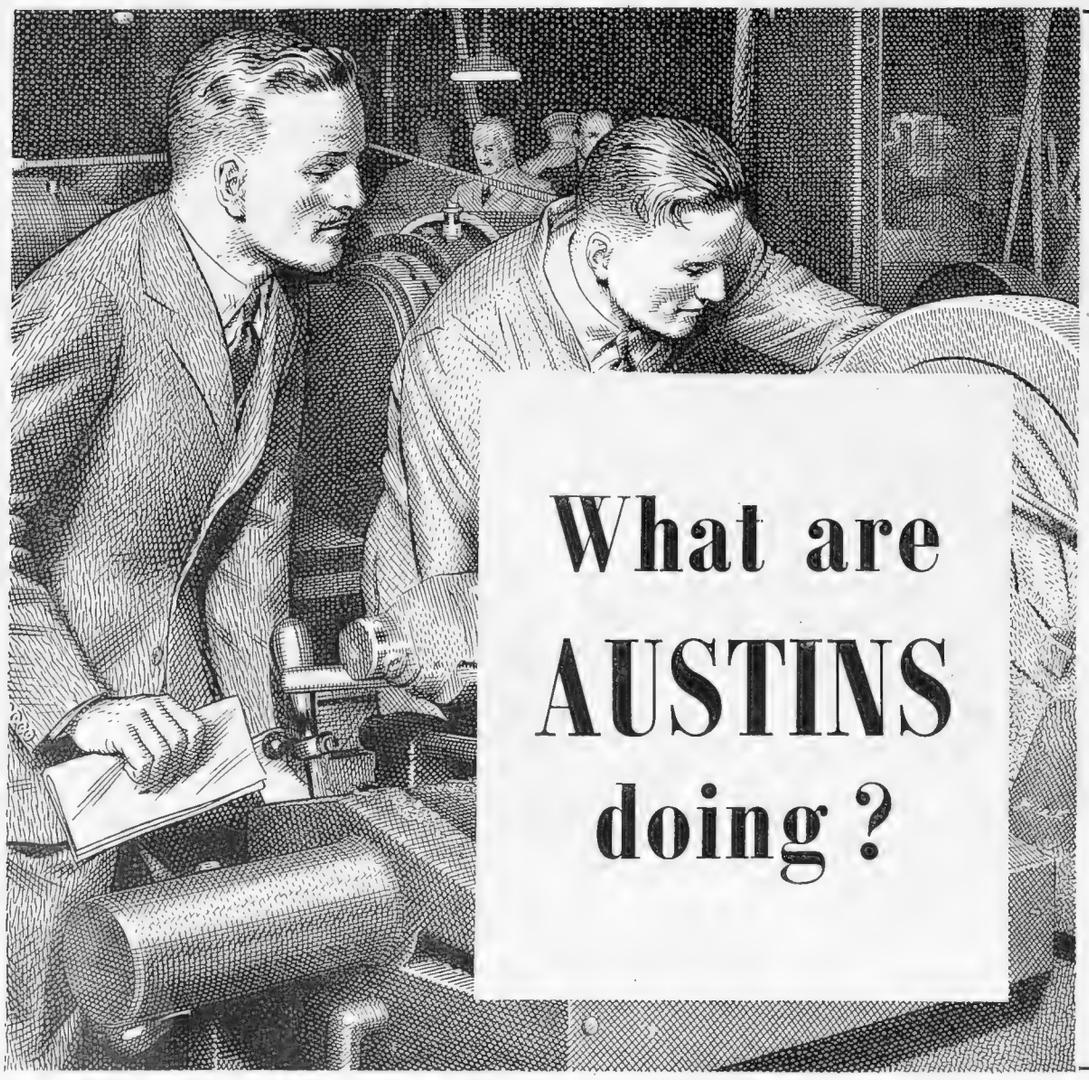

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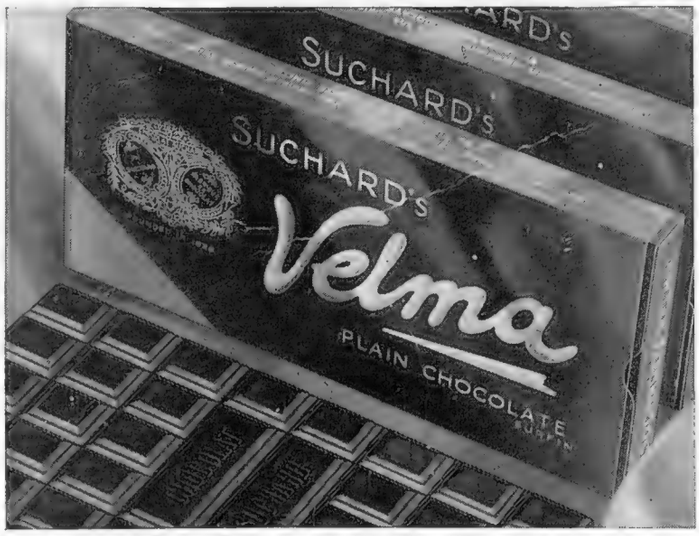

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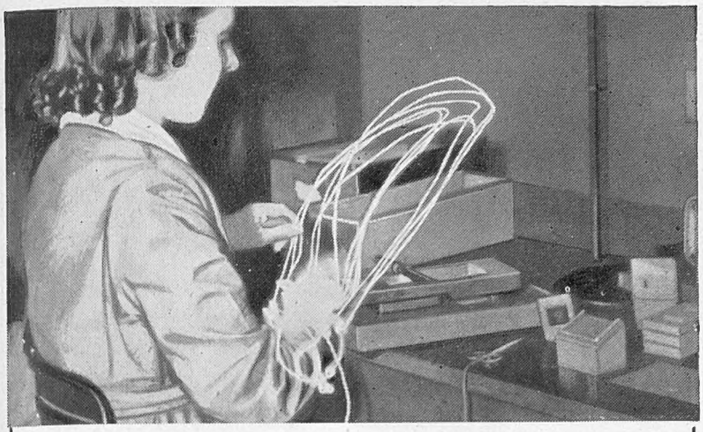

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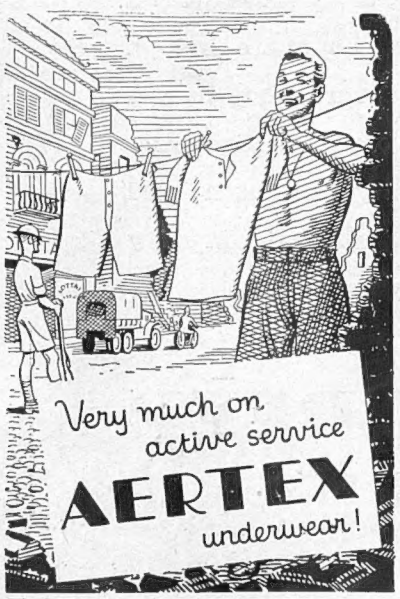

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Mr. Frean can hardly believe that he's been temporarily banished from the North. But as Mr. Peek says, it's all for the best, as this zoning scheme saves transport and helps to win the war. There are limited supplies of Vita-Weat in the South of England and Mr. Peek and Mr. Frean hope that you will get some from time to time to help keep you fit and cheerful.

Vita-Weat REGD.
PEEK FREAN'S CRISPBREAD

Made by Peek Frean & Co. Ltd., makers of famous biscuits

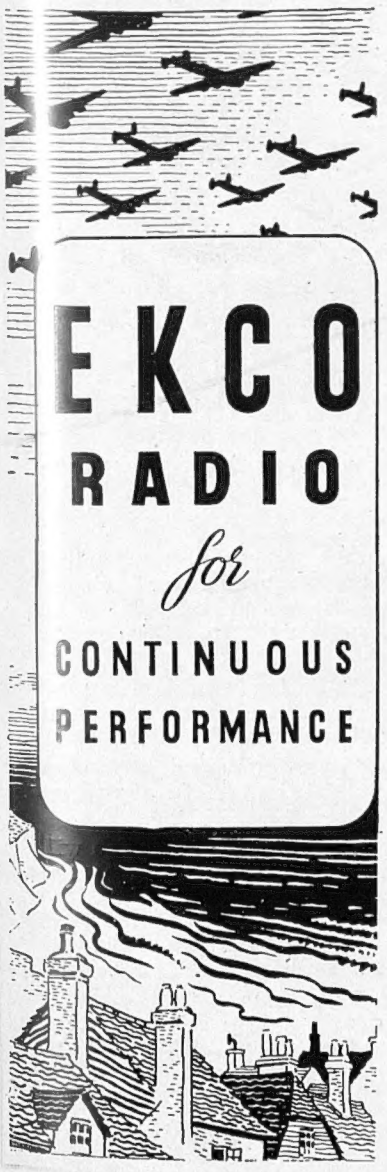
Preparing to be a Beautiful Lady

Barbara's hair is the colour of light and her complexion looks as if it were made of rose petals. Her mother is proud of this natural loveliness and spares no pains to guard it. A plain diet, plenty of sleep and Pears soap—Pears soap and clear water—these are mother's simple rules. And there are no others in Preparing to be a Beautiful Lady.

PEARS SOAP

We regret that Pears Transparent Soap is in short supply just now.

A & F. Pears Ltd. GG 370/396



★ **Vitabeau** Military & A.R.P. TRENCH COATS

★ **Vitabuoy** Life-Saving OVERCOAT

★

MUCH to our regret we are unable to manufacture any more of these wonderful coats. There are still a few available in one or two stores, and if you will drop us a line we will be glad to tell you where you can possibly buy one if you act at once.

Vitabuoy Products Ltd.

Beaufort House, Gravel Lane, London, E.1.

Telephone: BIShopsgate 6565

The Original West Indies APERITIF

Served cold it is a perfect Aperitif; with Ginger Ale it makes a refreshing drink and is the ideal base for a cup. Taken straight, PRHUM is an ideal 'Pick-me-up' to ease these days of strain.

PER 23/6 BOTTLE

Obtainable only through licensed dealers

Proprietors: RAWLINGS & SONS (London) LTD.

KERSHAW

A. KERSHAW & SONS, LTD.

MAKERS OF SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS IN GLASS, METAL AND PLASTICS

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PRISM BINOCULARS
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REFLEX CAMERAS
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SENSITIVE MACHINE TOOLS
PROJECTION LENSES
SOUND EQUIPMENT
KALEE CINEMATOGRAPH PROJECTOR

These and many other instruments will be obtainable on demand under peace conditions.

The vital needs of the nation, which must have first attention, preclude us from offering our manufactures at the present time.

Records are kept of inquiries made under present circumstances for contacting at a later date. Our temporary war-time address for this purpose is:—

A. KERSHAW & SONS, LIMITED

3 EMBASSY BUILDINGS, GERMAIN ST., CHESHAM, BUCKS

Phone: Chesham 266

BY APPOINTMENT TO H.M. KING GEORGE VI

Ever since the war began we have largely specialised in the fine tailoring of officers' uniforms for the Allied Fighting Services, and our materials, cut, style and workmanship have earned, and continue to earn, consistent approval.

When—may it be soon—we are able to resume our specialisation in civilian and sporting outfits, we hope to earn an equal satisfaction by providing clothes of unimpeachable style and character at a price-range which will notably endorse their value.

Bernard Weatherill Ltd

MILITARY, CIVIL AND SPORTING TAILORS—BREECHES EXPERTS

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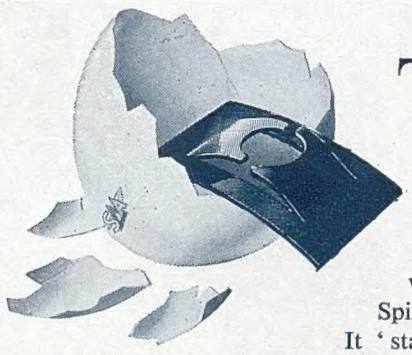
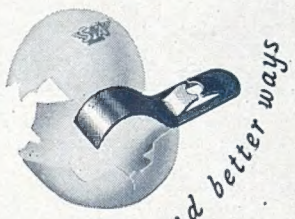
and at Aldershot, Camberley, Richmond (Yorks.), Newark, Hove, Douglas and Harrogate.



This
came first

When we first presented the Spire Tension Lock Nut we felt we'd done a good day's work. Spire certainly *was* a Stop Nut. It 'stayed put' under any vibratory or rotary movement; it needed no washers, spring or otherwise to keep it tight. But what looked like the end of a good story was, in fact, only the beginning. Before long we were finding new and better adaptations of the original Spire Nut. Soon there were Spire Nuts that could be clamped into awkward positions before assembly. Soon we were saying "But we needn't use a nut at all for this job. Make the Spire fixing part of the component and screw the whole thing straight into position." To-day there are over 300 different types of Spire fixings.



Finding new and better ways

There are two morals to this 'success story.' First, we don't sit back because we've done a good job. We try to make it better. Second, we found and are still finding better applications for Spire Nuts because our customers give us the opportunity. **To be continued . . .**

Simmonds Aerocessories Limited, Great West Road, London.
A Company of the Simmonds Group.

SIMMONDS

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7

THIRST QUENCHER OF OLD NILE

Dear Hawkins,

I am now in Cairo for a short spot of leave and spending some time in the Club where I sit on my shoulder blades in a long low chair, smoke cheroots and sip tall glasses of Rose's Lime Juice, nobly iced. Quite a change after months of tepid chlorinated water.

How are things going with you? I notice from the snap you enclosed that you have lost a certain amount of weight amidships. Or is that the effect of the Home Guard uniform?

We shall have to do something about your periphery after the war, for a streamlined Hawkins is as unnatural as a fat winner of the Waterloo Cup.

I met the Colonel in Shepheard's two days ago. You will remember that he stayed with us in 1937. He was a major at the time. He asked after you, and has also invited himself to come down for a week-end after the war. You might start planning the festivities forthwith, not overlooking the Rose's. I'm off for a swim. Best wishes.

Very sincerely,

G. de G. G.

ROSE'S—*There is no substitute*

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